SEX AND MUSIC ISSUE

PLAYBOY

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KID ROCK 20Q

MICK ROCK FASHION

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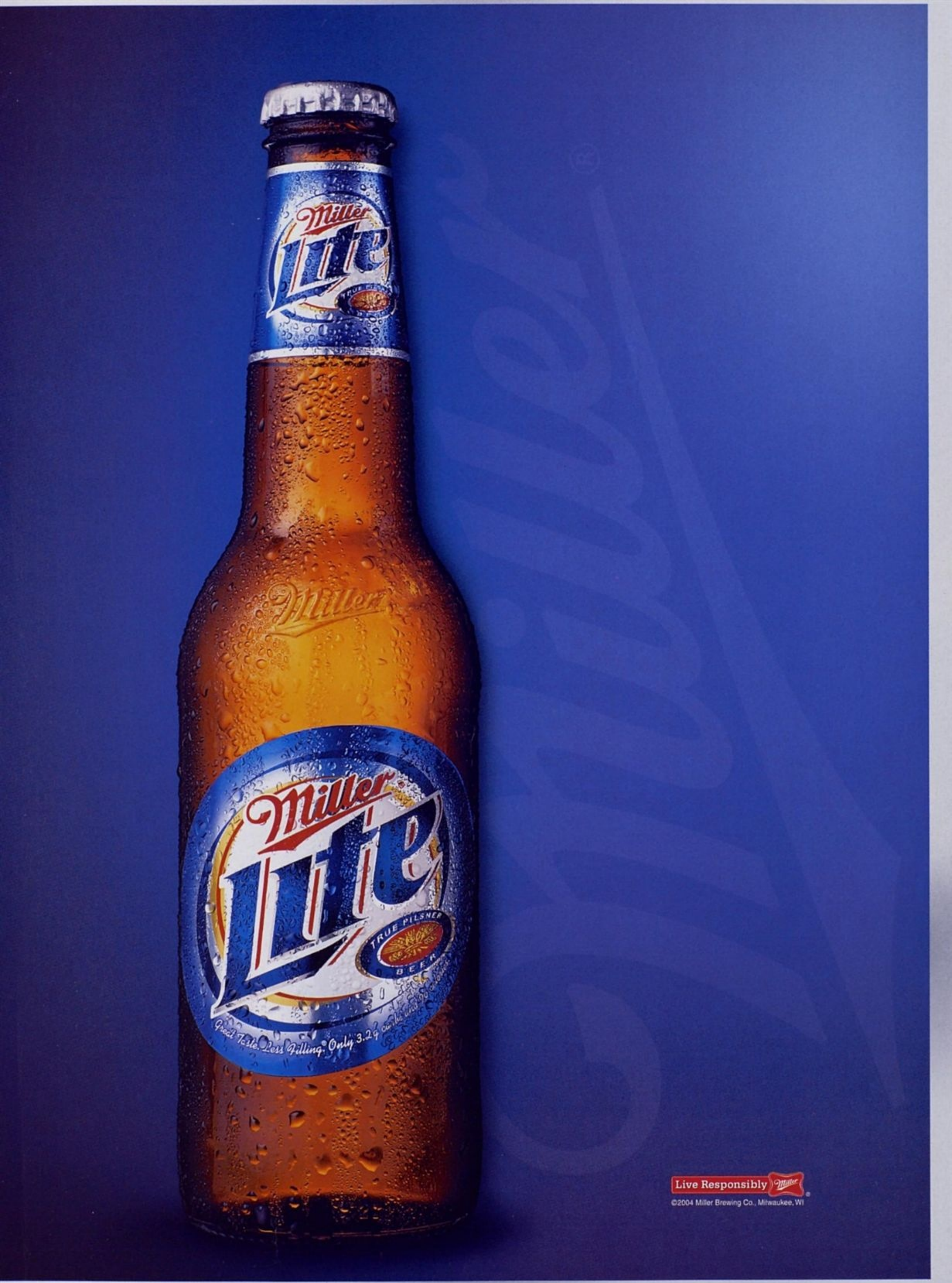

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Playbill

When **Debbie Gibson** took "Only in My Dreams" to the upper reaches of the pop charts in 1987, she probably didn't realize that the dreams of the guys her age were somewhat different—and that she wasn't wearing clothes in them. Now photographer **Guido Argentini** brings those dreams to life. "She didn't want anyone around, so it was just us," says Argentini. "That was a good thing, because most of my best work has been done that way—just me and the model. It is an advantage having just two people in the room. It is more intimate." Her best feature from behind the camera? "I don't even have to think about it," he says. "Her legs. In every shot I tried to enhance them. We got very different sides of her face and expression with different sorts of lighting. But her legs lit up every shot."

In *Stolen Screams* **Simon Cooper** tracks the investigation into the bold August 2004 theft in Oslo of Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream.* "I always like stories that involve cops and robbers and a bit of glamour," he says. "There is definitely a veneer of class to art theft. And the connections between art theft and other sorts of crime are very exciting—it's *The Thomas Crown Affair* meets *Heat.*"

The artwork that accompanies Chuck Palahniuk's new tale, *Punchdrunk,* is by **Geoffrey Grahn.** "It's a dark story," Grahn says. "I tried to pull out some of the main elements of it and do something graphic but without giving away the surprise ending." For the unique look of his piece, Grahn combines techniques: "I work with pen and ink and scratchboard, then do a lot of coloring on the computer."

Michael Fleming grapples with **The Rock** for this month's *Playboy Interview.* "He created a persona that made him a millionaire," Fleming explains. "So I knew he would be intelligent. And he is. But I didn't expect him to be as self-deprecating as he was. When you think about his persona as the Rock, you have certain expectations. And yet he is down-to-earth, humble and fun." But he still talks plenty of trash here.

Our annual music issue gets its killer riffs from the efforts of **Joseph De Acetis, Tim Mohr, Leopold Froehlich, Alison Prato** and especially **Mick Rock.** Anyone who owns LPs by Bowie, Queen, Blondie or other bands from the glam and punk eras already knows the work of this legendary photographer. In *Sex, Duds and Rock and Roll* he shoots cool new acts—including the Grammy-nominated Killers—wearing the latest attitude-driven fashions. Elsewhere in the package we scoop upcoming trends, check in with such notables as Velvet Revolver's Scott Weiland and the Streets, and tally the reader votes in our poll. Best of all, we include exclusive accounts of rockers losing their virginity—and what they were listening to when they did.

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UNIQUE WHIPS

SPEED

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Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream* is world famous. It's been called "the primal image of urban alienation" and is a symbol of Norwegian national pride. In slightly over a decade, it has also been stolen twice by daring thieves. Here is the suspenseful story of how cunning detectives versed in the international art-theft game found the painting and nabbed the culprits the first time—and how that case may suggest who has *The Scream* today. **BY SIMON COOPER**

90 **THE YEAR IN MUSIC 2005**
Thousands of you voted—and we listened! Velvet Revolver snags the award for best rock album, Kanye West wins for best hip-hop, and David Bowie is (finally!) inducted into the Playboy Hall of Fame. Who else won? You'll be surprised. Also: an ode to music goddesses from Gwen Stefani to Christina Aguilera, Q&As with Scott Weiland and the Streets, and first-hand tales of how your favorite rock stars lost their virginity. It's enough music to blow your speakers.

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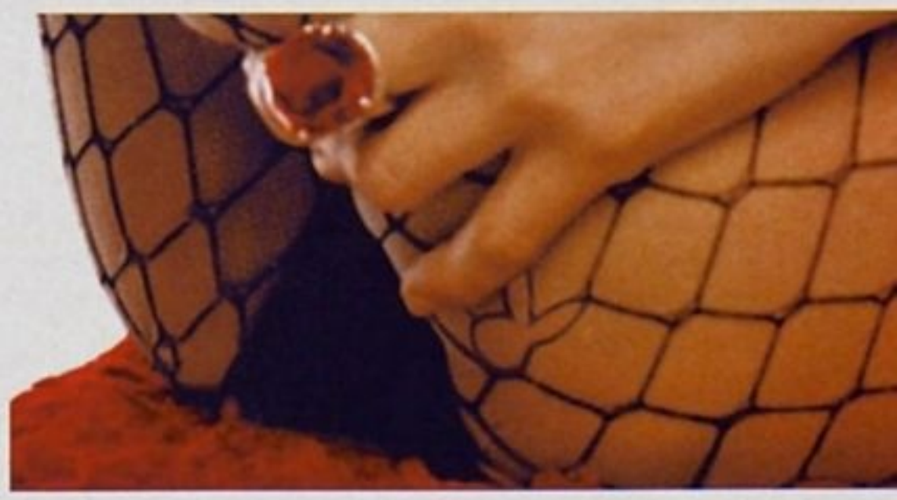
The world always needs an action hero, and former wrestler the Rock—who gave up his defensive-lineman spot at the University of Miami to Warren Sapp—is happy to serve. But he's no grunting Stallone clone. In his new movie, for instance, he plays a gay bodyguard. In the *Playboy Interview* he talks about steroids in sports (and his own use of them), when to brawl with fans and how he lost his virginity—both on-screen and in high school. **BY MICHAEL FLEMING**

COVER STORY

This year, after successful performances in prime time, on the best-sellers' list, in modeling and in heiressing, Paris Hilton indubitably ranks as the girl with whom we'd most likely want to succeed. It explains her appearance on top of our list of the sexiest celebrities of the year, surpassing some bare and bountiful competition. Our Rabbit worked his way into this photo taken by Odette Sugerman. He's convinced we've netted a lovely catch.



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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

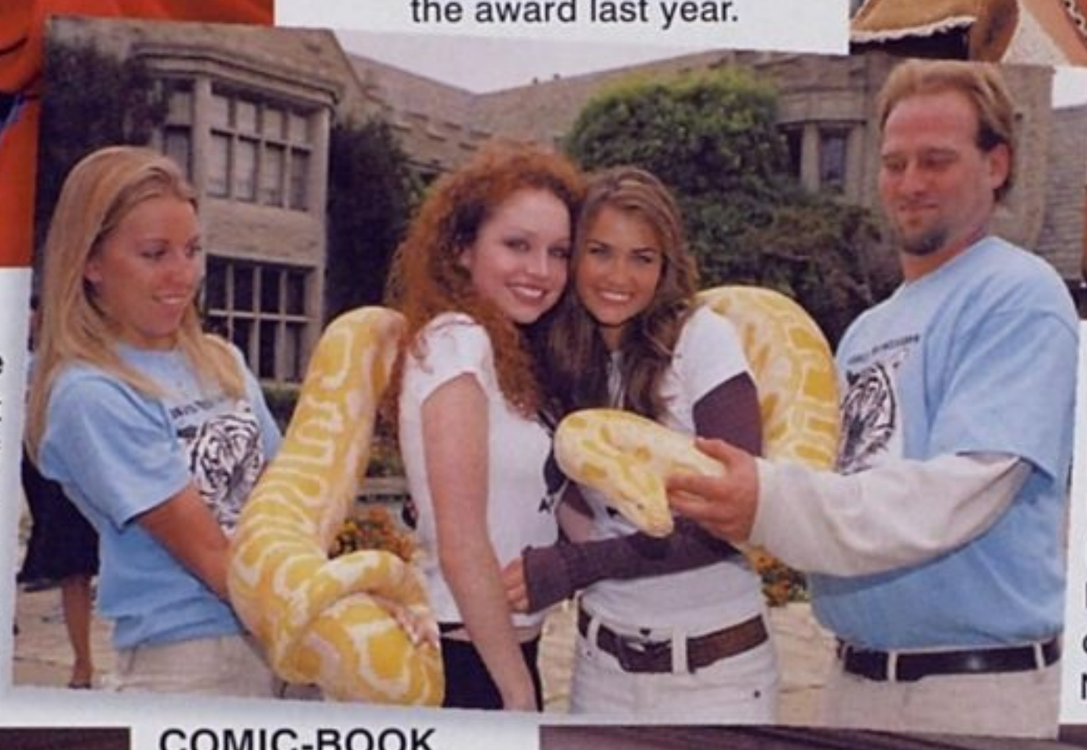
HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES

SUPREME PARTY ANIMAL

Diana Ross (above) came to the Wildlife WayStation event to accept a Special Friend Award on behalf of Sharon Stone for her "never-ending support of the WayStation's outreach and education efforts." More than 400 animals call the WayStation home.

WILD, WILD WEST COAST

The Wildlife WayStation held its 10th Annual Safari Brunch benefit at the Playboy Mansion, giving out an International Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. Richard Leakey for his dedication to the conservation of wild animals around the world. Hef received the award last year.



THE SERPENT AND THE CENTERFOLDS

Over the past 28 years, the WayStation has saved more than 76,000 animals. Left: Playmates Scarlett Keegan and Lauren Michelle Hill. Above: Nick Soderblom and *Desperate Housewives*' Nicolette Sheridan lend their support.

COMIC-BOOK CONFIDENTIAL

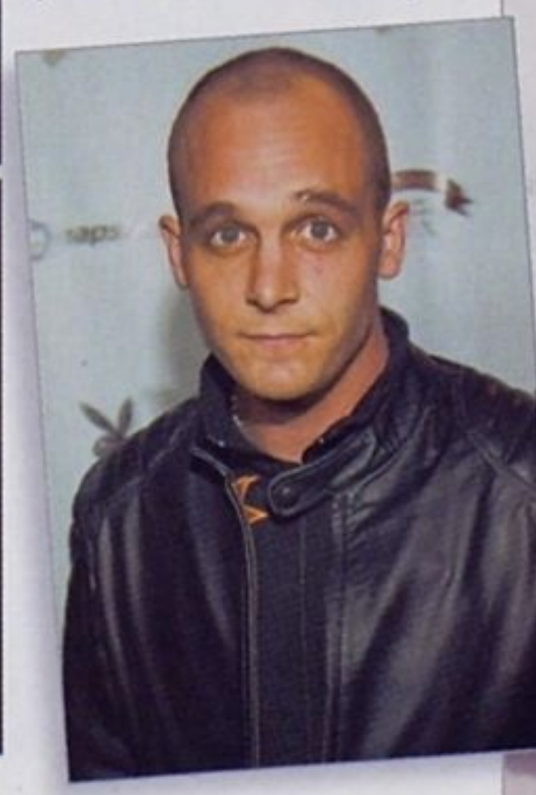
What's (almost) better than the true-life adventures of Hef and his girls? A comic-book version. Stan Lee, creator of Spider-Man, the Hulk and more, met with Hef at the Mansion to discuss the pilot for the animated MTV series *Hef's Superbunnies.*

ONCE UPON A CLASSIC

Ben Stiller and his wife, Christine Taylor, hosted an invite-only Grand Classics screening of *Sweet Smell of Success* at the Mansion. Grand Classics is devoted to film preservation, and this event was a fund-raiser for the American Film Institute. Hef and his girls were there, as were Stiller's parents, Anne Meara and Jerry Stiller (above right), and Bridget Moynahan (right).

PREY FOR ROCK AND ROLL

To celebrate our December Music Poll, we teamed with Napster for a rocking party at Prey in L.A. Guest of honor Miss December Tiffany Fallon partied with members of 311 (above), singer Mya (below right) and actor Ethan Embry (below). The night also celebrated Leo DiCaprio's birthday. (Yes, Gisele was there.)



HANGIN' WITH HEF

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The latest in the life of Mr. Playboy: (1) Hef, upcoming Playmate Courtney Rachel Culkin and his girlfriends running into Steven Tyler and his wife, Teresa, at Koi. (2) The Man flanked by Playmates Tiffany Fallon and Jillian Grace. (3) Carrying on with Dennis Rodman at Bliss. (4) Fuel singer Brett Scallions playing at the Mansion's Black Dragon–Cutty Sark Sweepstakes bash. (5) The band Busted and pal. (6) Tara Reid and Holly getting crazy at Concorde. (7) Hef, his girlfriends, *Amazing Race* Centerfold Victoria Fuller, her husband, Jon Baker, and fellow cast members watching the show's premiere at Sportsmen's Lodge. (8) 50th Anniversary Centerfold Colleen Shannon and Hef. (9) Shauna Sand and Lana Kinnear at Hunter S. Thompson's book signing at the Taschen store. (10) Holly, Hef and Carmella DeCesare at Glamourcon in L.A. (11) Brande Roderick signing autographs for fans. (12) Hef and his girlfriends with Playmate Kimberly Holland. (13) With Lisa Dergan, host of *Totally Outrageous Behavior,* at Glamourcon. (14) With Bridget, Jillian Grace and Kendra at Bliss.

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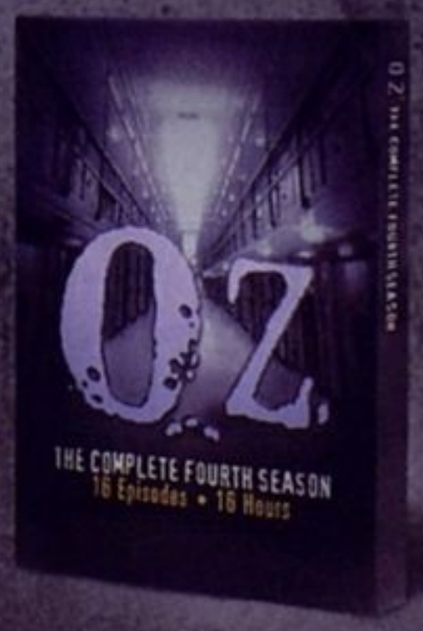

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DENISE RICHARDS

I am a bisexual 40-year-old woman who loves your magazine because you understand that a beautiful woman is like a work of art. I found the Denise Richards pictorial (*Wild Thing,* December) especially beautiful. Thank you for a wonderful holiday present.

C. Jones
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

I've always said that if I could be reincarnated as anyone, I would be Hef. Now I'd rather be Charlie Sheen.

Kurt Levins
Marlton, New Jersey

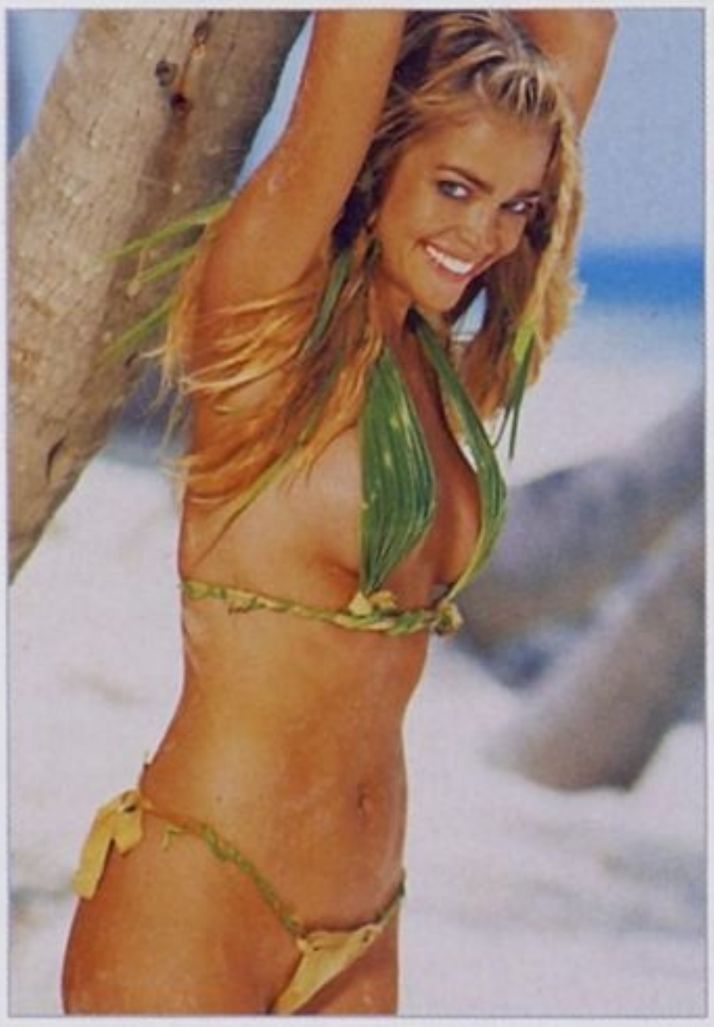
Why did you photograph such a beautiful woman covered in sand and mud? It's neither artistic nor erotic.

Owen Jones
Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, Florida

The only thing better than a Denise Richards pictorial would be one of her *Wild Things* co-star Neve Campbell.

Kyle Tamminen
Thunder Bay, Ontario

I swear I sat behind Denise in Spanish class during high school, but I can't find any of my old yearbooks to confirm it. Did she spend her freshman year at Tinley Park High? Those piercing green eyes...*bonita*!



Denise Richards: It's all in the eyes.

Steve Jadzak
Tinley Park, Illinois

She did, and she says hola.

As the mother of two young boys, I think it's nice that PLAYBOY finds new moms like Denise Richards sexy. Your next search should be for MILFs!

Michele Greentree
Chantilly, Virginia

For shame! Your cover promised 10 pages of Denise Richards nude. I see eight; she's in a bikini in the first two.

Curtis Barker
Valley Village, California

Can we get half credits for those?

COMIC-BOOK ART

Thank you for allowing Glen David Gold to shine a spotlight on our little hobby of collecting comic-book art (*The Incredible Adventures of the Collector,* December). I'm sure many PLAYBOY readers grew up on a diet of capes and masks and have a box of comics somewhere that they've read to shreds. The hobby feeds on that nostalgia. Anyone who is curious is invited to join us at Comicart-L at yahoogroups.com.

Gary Land
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Gold provides a fascinating look at a seedy and escapist business. It'd be great to see more comic art in PLAYBOY.

Dale Moore
Bonney Lake, Washington

Gold reads one self-help book and thinks he knows everything. Yes, some people become addicted to accumulating, and that's unfortunate. But some of us collect within our means, appreciate the artistic value of things and simply like possessing an artifact of pop culture as a touchstone for some personal memory. It's speculators like Gold who drive prices higher.

Aaron Davis
DeKalb, Illinois

Initially I thought collecting comics would be a harmless way to blow a few bucks. Then I had to move home to take care of my ailing mother. She has recovered, but for a time the child had become the parent. What better retreat than the four-color escapism of comic books? Unlike Gold, I can't ascribe my fascination solely to comic books' ability to evoke memories of happier, more secure times. I think it's the fact that death never has the final say in comics. They are the domain of superscience, potions and serums, cloning and regeneration, resurrections and reincarnation. They reassure us that evil will be defeated, no matter what the state of the real world.

Greg O'Driscoll
Nahunta, Georgia

WHEN DINO ROAMED THE EARTH

How fortunate Dean Martin must feel in that big lounge in the sky knowing that he appears so close to your Playmate and Denise Richards (*The Importance of Being Dino,* December). The first stage of his career was with Jerry Lewis. The second was with a group of guys who played Las Vegas like a ride at Disneyland. As an executive at NBC, I knew Martin in his third life, on television. When *The Dean Martin Show* began, he was 48, but to me he was like a kid in an adult body. Producer Greg Garrison recognized that boy and gave him a fire pole, bookcases of booze and all the Golddiggers he wanted. In the next stage of his career, audiences in Vegas wanted to believe he was drinking cocktails. In reality it was apple juice. He never really drank martinis. A little scotch for dinner or a cold can of beer was what he liked. What he devoured best was a good game of golf. Martin's career was built on the PLAYBOY image, and Bill Zehme captures what endeared Martin to us. By the way, Bill, I have shoes to go with your pair of Dean's pants.

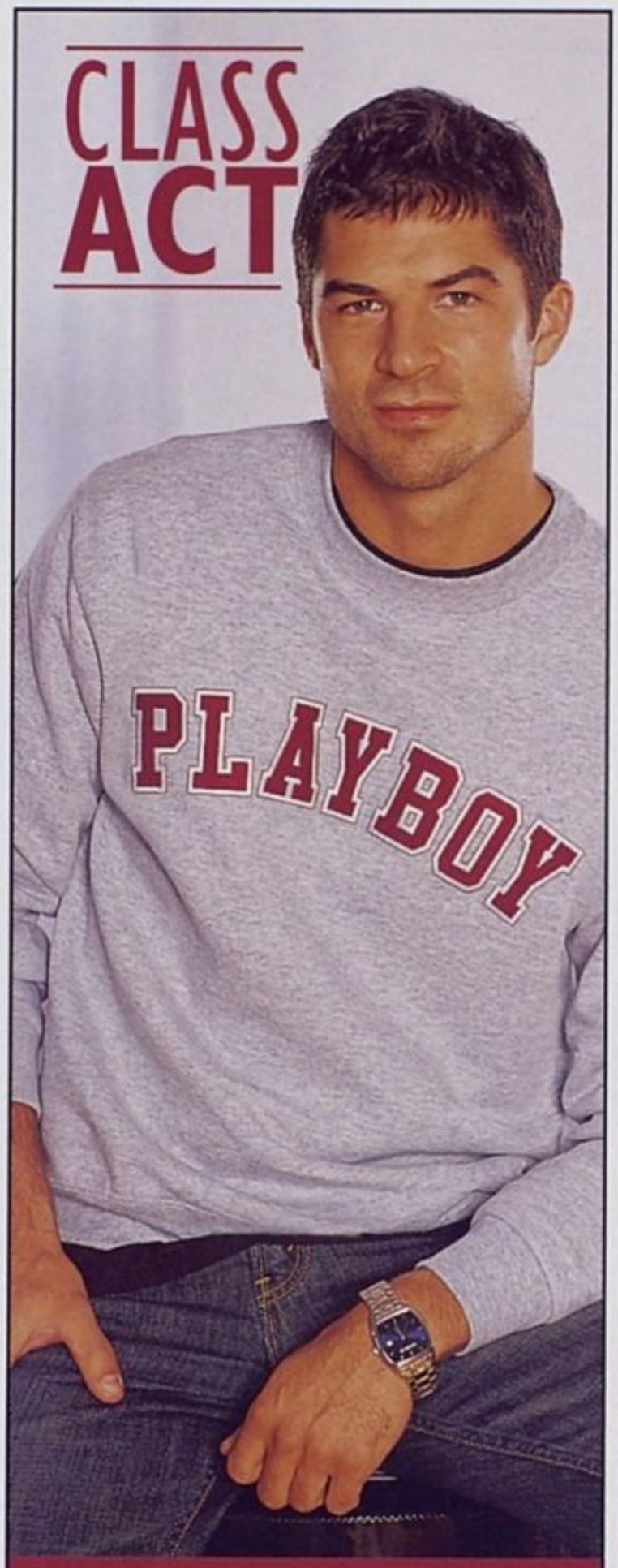
Still having a good time, somewhere.

Neil Daniels
DeanMartinFanCenter.com
Arcadia, California

When are you finally going to put Martin in your music Hall of Fame? I am tired of writing in his name on my music poll ballot every year.

Delmo Walters Jr.
Bronx, New York

Zehme writes that "Martin and Lewis were considered the biggest act in the



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history of show business." Tell that to the Beatles, Elvis or even Martin's pal Frank Sinatra. Even Dean Martin was bigger than Martin and Lewis.

Bruce Mark
Berkeley, California

ANSON MOUNT WINNER

For years you have awarded the Anson Mount Scholar-Athlete award to the college basketball player who best excels in the classroom and on the court. Yet I didn't see it in your December preview (*In the Paint*).

Al Lazette
Portland, Michigan

We simply ran out of space but are pleased to recognize the winner here. Chris Hill, a senior guard for Michigan State, has a 3.98 GPA and a deadly jumper. In his honor we presented the university with $5,000 for its general scholarship fund.

FALLING FOR FALLON

Tiffany Fallon is so beautiful it hurts (*Christmas With Tiffany,* December). I have a little bar in my home and keep the Centerfold open on it. This month I can't do it—she's too distracting. If she doesn't win Playmate of the Year, you'll be receiving a letter of protest.

Anthony Pellegrino
Aberdeen, Washington

After months of blonde Playmates, you finally have a blue-eyed brunette who's taller than five-foot-five. Not only that, she's 30 years old. Keep them coming!

George Freeman
Orange, California

THE PERFECT GIFT

From its fantastic Playmate to the Dean Martin tribute to the Denise Richards pictorial, your December issue is one of the best since I began subscribing 15 years ago.

Chris Fiegehen
Carson City, Nevada

REMEMBERING POMPEO

Thank you for your tribute to one of PLAYBOY's great photographers (*Remembering Pompeo Posar,* December). Pompeo was the first person ever to photograph me in my birthday suit. In fact, mine was his last Centerfold. I was extremely nervous. In his thick Italian accent Pompeo said sweetly, "Your boobies look so beautiful, like soft cushions," which was a pleasant change from hearing "Nice tits" all the time on the street. He made me laugh and helped me relax. Pompeo made me feel like I was doing great, even though I knew the magazine had to throw away the photos taken during the first few days because I looked like a deer in headlights. His endearing nature made me fall in love with him and made my Playmate shoot one of the best experiences of my life. I will always keep him close to my heart and soft cushions.

Jenny McCarthy
Los Angeles, California

I don't mind admitting that I have read PLAYBOY for 50 years mostly because of the knockout photographs. And Pompeo created a large number of the masterpieces.

Lanny Middings
San Ramon, California

I shot Centerfolds with Pompeo between 1968 and 1980. He had the most remarkable techniques of any photographer I knew, and they paid off. Centerfolds often take days to shoot in the studio. I have compared it to photographing a group of 40 people, because if you got her hair right, her expression might be off, or if you got her hand right, her head might be turned wrong. We didn't work with assistants, so we would end up taking hundreds of eight-by-tens to get the perfect shot for the Centerfold. That's why the photo Pompeo shot of Playmate Claire Rambeau (Miss October 1971) is so amazing. Although it was taken outside on a hill in natural light, he nailed it within an hour. Pompeo's least favorite photo was one of his most famous, the cover of the December 1968 issue, for which he transformed Playmate Cynthia Myers into a Christmas tree. He thought he made her look fat. We kidded him about that for years.

One of Pompeo's great shots, from 1971.

Dwight Hooker
Salt Lake City, Utah

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babe of the month

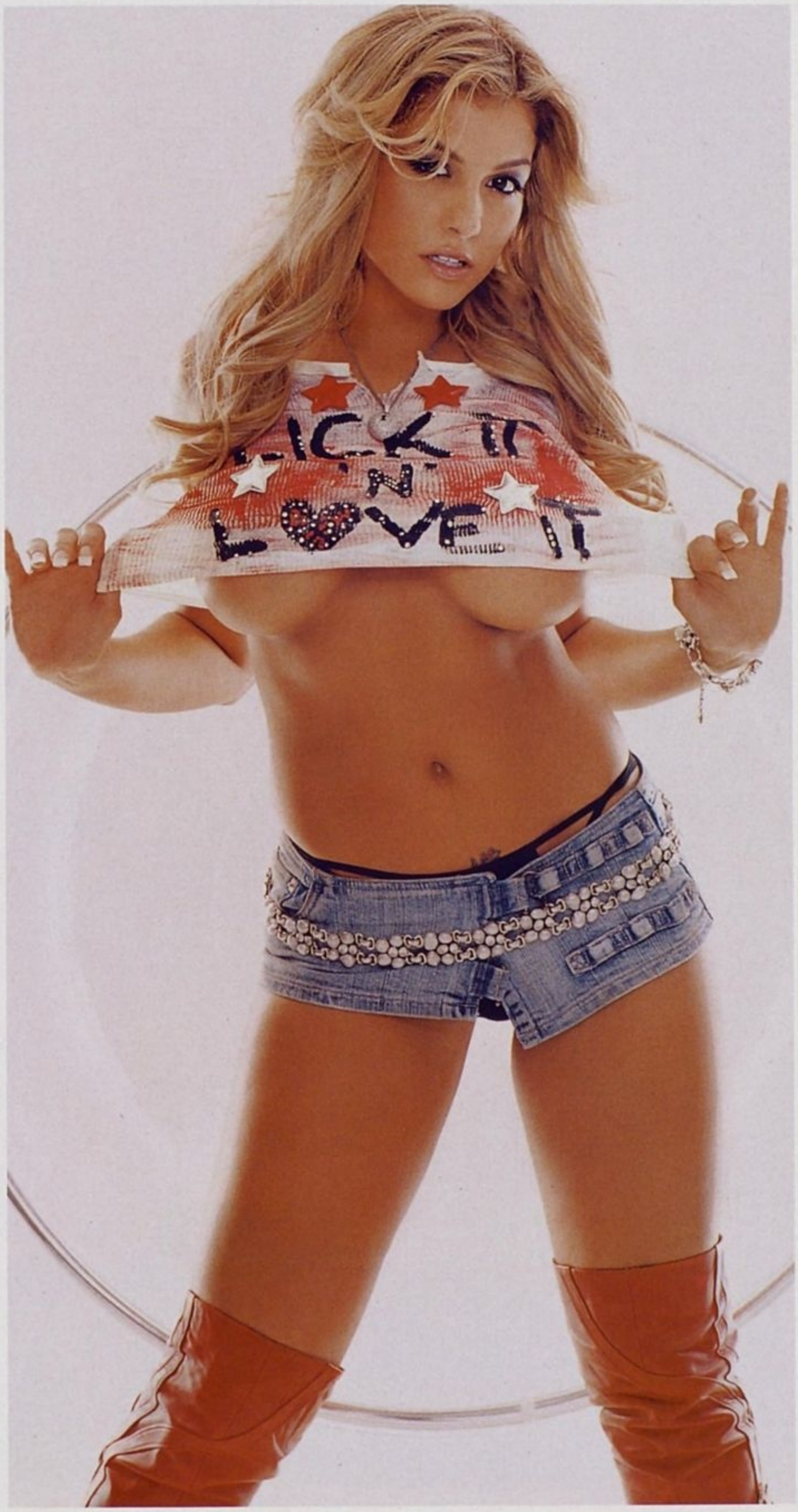
Gloria Velez

This veteran rump shaker is juiced to bum-rush the show

Gloria Velez has sexed up plenty of rap videos, but don't tell her that rhyming is a boys-only gig. "I started out dancing in videos for Jay-Z, Ja Rule and Sisqó. People think video girls just know how to look pretty and shake their ass," she says. "I really had to prove myself. Hip-hop isn't a look, clothes or a color. It's a movement and a culture." With a song on the upcoming Clover G Records compilation album and her 14-track *Mixtape* CD (available at gloriavelez.com), 26-year-old Gloria is all over the mike.

"I've got the ear candy and the eye candy—you can't go wrong."

"You've got to give people more than just one type of flow," she says. "I can rap fast or slow and sexy. I like to mix in a little rock, Latin and down south so people who don't even like hip-hop will listen." And to paraphrase a past crossover diva, no money man can win this single mom's love. "My son is my little big man, my life, so you have to share me, not take care of me," she says. "I want a man to be spiritual and grounded—my best friend. Sometimes I like to be in control. Sometimes I like to be controlled. It all depends on what mood I'm in. Who doesn't like sex?" Gloria's appeal has earned her spots on *Chappelle's Show* and Playboy TV, as well as tags such as "the Pamela Anderson of hip-hop" and Triple Threat. "Very few women have beauty, brains and talent," she says. "I've got the ear candy and the eye candy—you can't go wrong."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANTOINE VERGLAS

MY MILK SHAKE IS BETTER THAN YOURS

SPECIAL DELIVERY: Gloria first tried rapping in an all-girl group at the age of 20. "I started rhyming, and a girl in the group said, 'You can do this because you sing fast,'" she says. "Ever since then I've practiced my lyrics, and that helps me write my poetry. I just keep rapping."

NAKED GLORY: At one point Gloria worked at strip clubs as an exotic dancer to support her family. "Some guys were genuinely nice and just out to look at beautiful women," she says. "I'm not afraid of the stage, and I'm real comfortable with my body, too."

BELIEVE THE TYPE: Gloria welcomes feedback on her website, especially from women. "I feel women can relate to me," she says. "I can give them confidence and motivation by being a single mom and a model who is voluptuous, not a skinny rail."

BUM RAP: "Of course rappers try to hit on you when you work a video—they're men," she says. "They hired us to be there and make them look good, but it's acting. Honestly, they were real gentlemen. If you said no, it was no. And I'm really strong when I say no."

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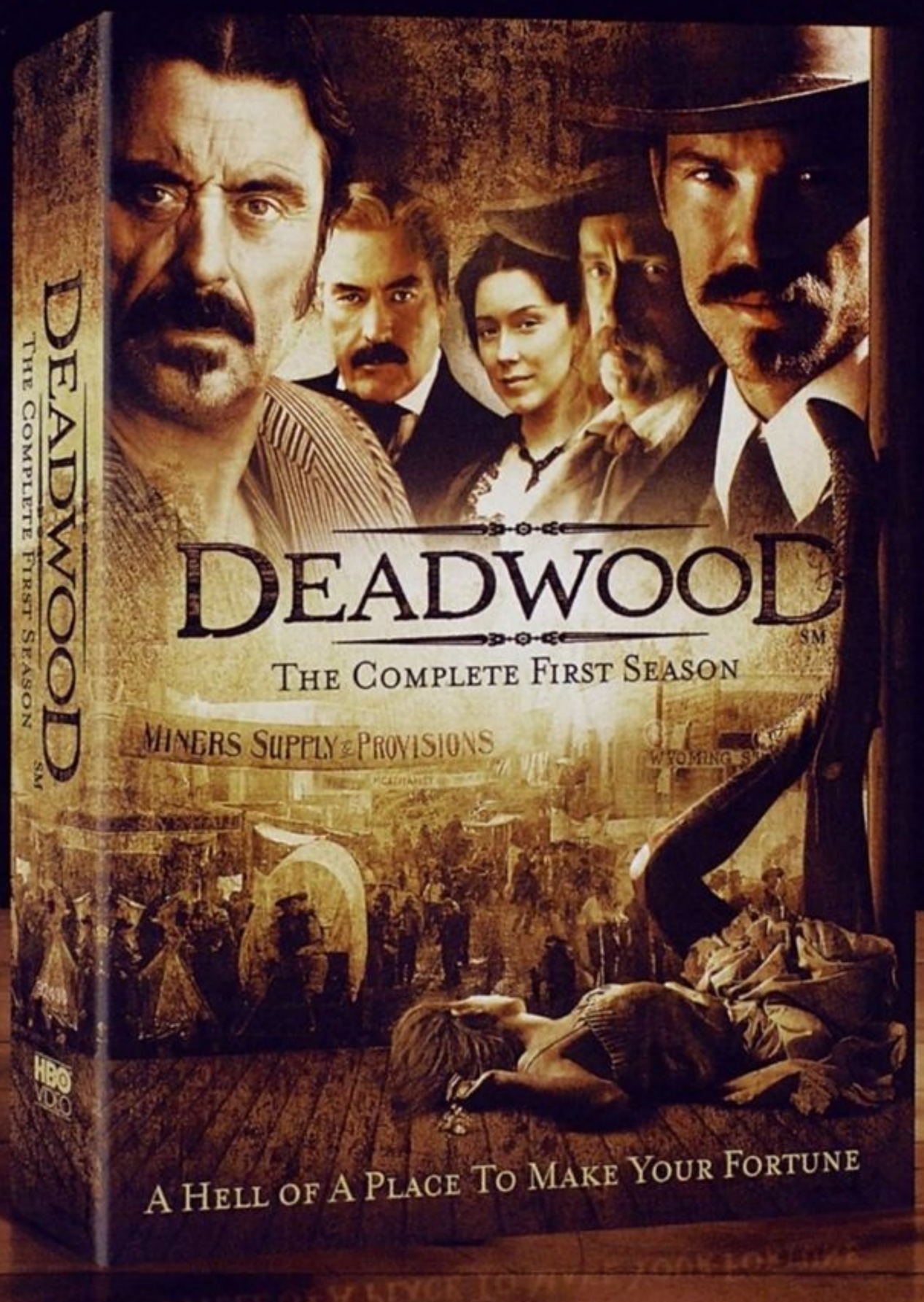

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CHRIS RYNIAK

BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE $8 TRILLION?

CREATIVE WAYS TO TAME THE DEBT

At year's end the national debt ceiling was a record $8.2 trillion, which is around 70 percent of the size of the entire U.S. economy. To put it mildly, some belt tightening and fund-raising are in order. A few measures the Congressional Budget Office is mulling:

Mow Canada's lawn twice a month.

Print a gag $8 trillion bill. Buy duct tape, a pack of gum and a jar of pickles with it at Wal-Mart. Take the change and run.

Sell corporate sponsorships for presidential appearances. There's a fortune in soundbites like "War in Iraq? I'm lovin' it," "Rumsfeld—like a rock!" and "Nothing runs like Michael O. Leavitt, your new Secretary of Health and Human Services."

Declare war on creditors in the tradition of the war on drugs and the war on terror. Identify an axis of creditors and make no distinction between creditors and the nations that harbor them.

Never buy Patriot cruise missiles without a coupon.

Throw a fair on the White House lawn with a Condoleezza Rice kissing booth, a Karl Rove dunk tank, Lynne Cheney's heart-smart baked goods and a song-and-dance show in the big barn by John Ashcroft & the Soaring Eagles.

LowerMyBills.com.

Land on an aircraft carrier and declare ourselves all paid up.

Invest in a can't-miss reality-TV series: Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic and Henry Kissinger must share a tiny house while lying low in a remote South American village.

Put it all on 17 black.

stripped to kill

NICE BAZOOKAS

AT ACTIONGIRLS.COM, MODELS GO BALLISTIC

With its odd vignettes about heavily armed, nudity-prone heroines and villainesses, Actiongirls.com takes a flamethrower to the idea that downloadable skin clips can't look good. "I love hot girls," says Actiongirls.com director-webmaster Scotty JX, "and it's always been my dream to make action movies. In my films, oiled-up models shoot guns, girls work out in the nude, girls wrestle in the shower. It's like playing with action figures—mine just happen to be Veronica Zemanova and Sylvia Saint." Scotty's postapocalyptic, mostly dialogue-free world is high on suspense and vague on plot. In one clip the chesty Zemanova prowls a crumbling factory. A mystery woman on a motorcycle skids into the frame, then leaves. Moments later Zemanova shoots random objects with a shotgun, then sheds her sweat-soaked top. And then it's over—that, folks, is entertainment! "Not all models have what it takes to be Actiongirls," says Scotty. "The guns are heavy. The girls have to hit the deck take after take. They're real troupers, and they have fun kicking ass."

update

FACIAL FEAT

WHISKER WEARERS HOLD NIGHT OF THE LONG BEARD

Germany's world-beating beard growers (last seen in March 2004's *After Hours*) are at it again. In this Stuttgart stunt, 20 wild-whiskered Fritzes hooked hair to form a record beard chain—24 meters! *Wunderbar.*

dreams come true

DANIEL CHEN

THREE'S COMPANY

THE TRIPLE—IS IT EASIER THAN YOU THINK?

Tips from Jen Sincero, author of *The Straight Girl's Guide to Sleeping With Chicks*, on how to get your lady friend to get down with a girl—and let you watch or play along.

She has to think your relationship is **solid;** otherwise she'll see the idea as a threat, and she'll resist. Don't even hint at Canadian doubles if your relationship's fire is flickering.

If your girl likes porn, see how she reacts to **girl-on-girl** scenes. (Avoid all-girl movies, e.g. anything with the word *munchers* in the title.) If she's getting a little hot, suggest the three-way—casually, as if you'd never thought of it before.

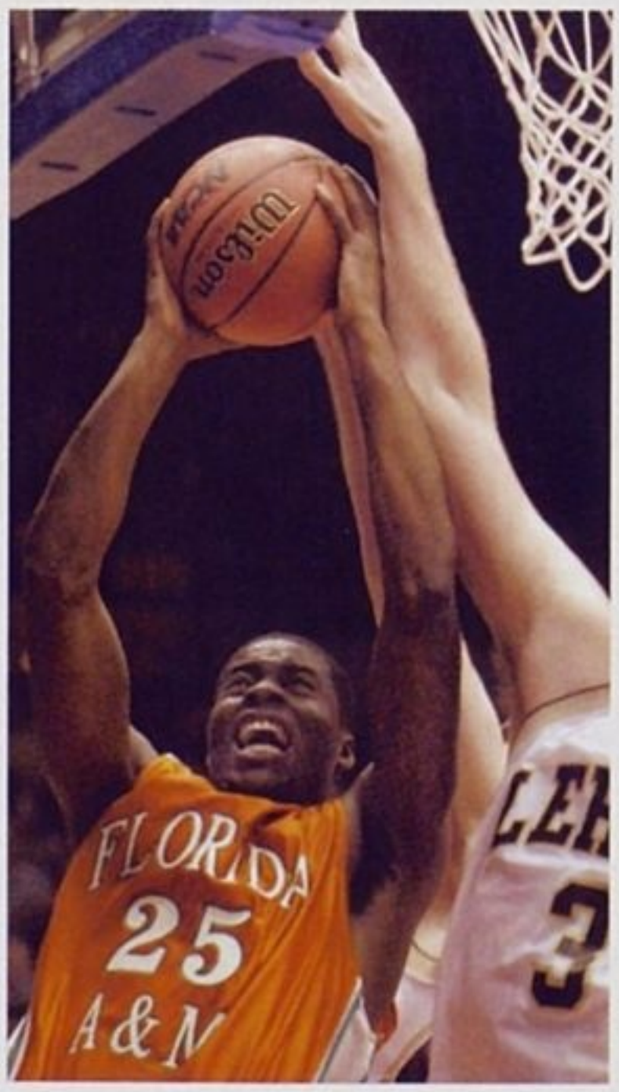
Reading **erotica aloud** might be a better bet. You want her to imagine getting naked with a girlfriend—perhaps easier to do with fictional characters than Jenna Jameson. (Exception: Your girl and Jenna are friends.) Again, the girl-girl is a component of the story but not its entire focus.

Propose writing a sexual **wish list** of five to 10 things (activities, not people or objects) you'd like to do. Bury the girl-on-girl among other ideas; she'll either pick it or skip it.

Admit it's a fantasy but one you don't expect will ever happen. You're **confiding,** not trying to convince. She may do it just to see the look on your face. Practice that look.

Seeing you touch another woman is something she probably thinks of as horrific, not exciting. **Set up a mirror** in your bedroom to get her used to watching sex. If she finds she likes the voyeuristic thrill, she may be more open to seeing you with another girl. Or in a bigger mirror.

guest spot: max kellerman



MARCH TO VICTORY

HOW TO WIN YOUR OFFICE POOL, FROM A GUY WHO DOES

March Madness is America's best excuse to gamble, and at bracket time the pressure on my co-workers—hard-core sports geeks who frankly have no lives—is intense. Two years ago I won the office pool by correctly picking Syracuse, and I'll never let them hear the end of it. My points of emphasis for 2005:

1. Learn from your mistakes. I can't tell you how many times I've been burned by Cincinnati. The Bearcats are just no good in the tournament.

2. Don't obsess over the play-in game. Flip a coin. Do eeny-meeny-miney-moe. Whatever.

3. Ignore fancy analysis of the small teams. It doesn't matter who Florida A&M's go-to guy is. What matters is the coach, the program, the schedule and how the team plays on the road.

4. The backcourt makes the offense. The dominant center is extinct—elite teams need explosive guards. All you need up front is defense.

5. Trust the cliché. People say defense wins championships, but they bet on offense. Take last year's Wake Forest team—the kids were fun to watch, but they played no defense, and they were sitting ducks in the tournament. They gave up 158 points in the first two games before losing to St. Joe's—a team that played great defense.

Max Kellerman is the host of Fox Sports Network's I, Max.

buzz of the month

AU NATUREL HIGH

HIGH TIMES HONORS US WITH A SINSEMILLA GATEFOLD

The *High Times* gatefold—an extra large photo of grade-A pot—began as a cheeky homage to our own Playmates but ended up a staple of the stoner bible. For the magazine's 30th anniversary the editors tweaked the idea again with this image of artfully bud-decked model Aesha Waks. Somehow they knew weed approve.

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leave it to beavers

CLARK BENSON TATE

SUD BROTHERS

BEER-BACKED FRATERNITY PROMOTES ALE BONDING

"We were watching TV," says Oregon State University junior Joel VanDyke, "and we thought, What if we start a fake frat and see if Pabst will sponsor it?" The idea was either genius or folly—and there was only one way to find out which. VanDyke and classmate Grant Fruhwirth pitched it to the Pabst Brewing Co.; imagine the students' surprise when a Pabst executive gave the idea the green light. Pi Beta Rho (get it?), the nation's first brewer-affiliated frat, isn't recognized by the university, but the blue-ribbon boys of Pabst House are hardly troubled. "Everyone in the Greek community loves us," says VanDyke. "We have quite a few kegs rolling through here." From a Pabst rep they call the Godfather, the six men of ΠΒΡ received branded banners, dartboards and tin signs; their end of the bargain includes keeping a 2.5 GPA and "requesting Pabst on tap at every bar we go to." Ad hoc initiation includes viewing the noir flick *Blue Velvet,* in which Dennis Hopper's character blurts, "Heineken? Fuck that shit! Pabst Blue Ribbon!" Can Mu Gamma Delta be far off?

sounds familiar

THE DIFFERENCE

FOR THE DISCRIMINATING DISCERNER

Barbara Bush is the slender Yalie with the high forehead; **Jenna Bush** is the husky blonde who falls down in bars.

Cocaine is a white guy serving two years; **crack** is a black guy doing 10.

Men's Health is a magazine about abs; ***Men's Fitness*** is a magazine about lats; ***Muscle & Fitness*** is a magazine about 'roids; ***Muscle Car Enthusiast*** is a magazine about Vettes and Stangs; ***Health & Fitness Car*** is not a magazine, nor should it be.

An **agent** knocks on the door; a **special agent** shoots you; a **secret agent** makes it look like a suicide.

Gambling is done with wadded-up bills; **gaming** is done with chips.

Prostrate means you're lying flat; **prostate** means you're bent over.

employee of the month

HOT ITEM

HARDWORKING HSN MODEL SARA DYE GIVES US THE SOFT SELL

PLAYBOY: What do you do?

SARA: I'm what they call on-air talent for the Home Shopping Network. I model everything—jewelry, hair products and clothes. I've done more than 2,000 hours of television.

PLAYBOY: Does an HSN model have a fan following?

SARA: Yes, guys set up web pages and Yahoo groups. The men are like, "Oh, Sara's on right now, and she's wearing a skirt." They take pictures off the TV and post them online. There are little thumbnails of me modeling earrings all over the Internet—it's pretty funny.

PLAYBOY: How do you dress for modeling jewelry?

SARA: We usually wear little dresses and full makeup. For modeling necklaces you need something especially low-cut. They encourage sexiness but don't want you to be too sexy. It's always freezing in the studio—they say they have to keep it that way for the camera equipment. And you know what happens to a woman's nipples when it gets cold. That's always an issue at HSN.

Employee of the Month candidates: Send pictures to PLAYBOY Photography Department, Attn: Employee of the Month, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Must be at least 18 years old. Must send photocopies of a driver's license and another valid ID (not a credit card), one of which must include a current photo.

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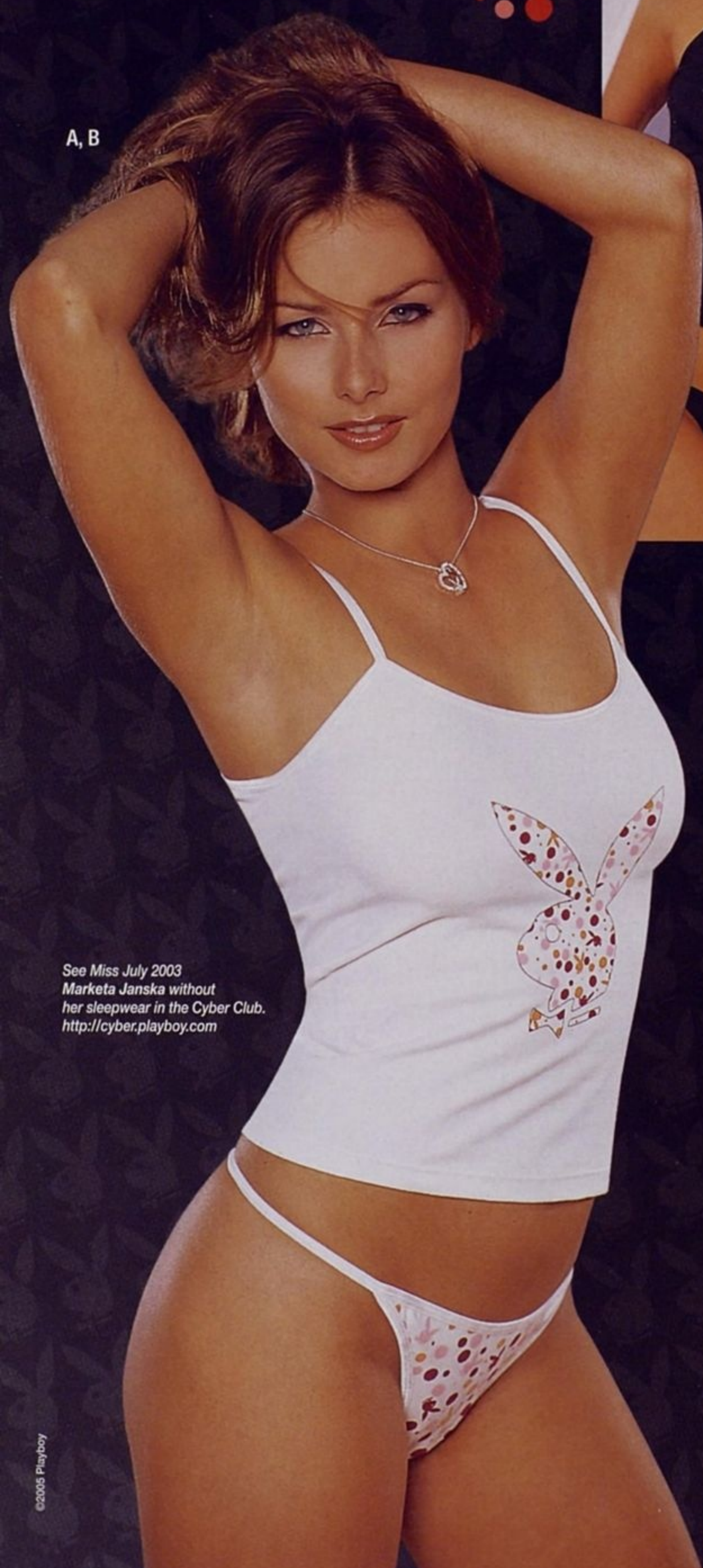
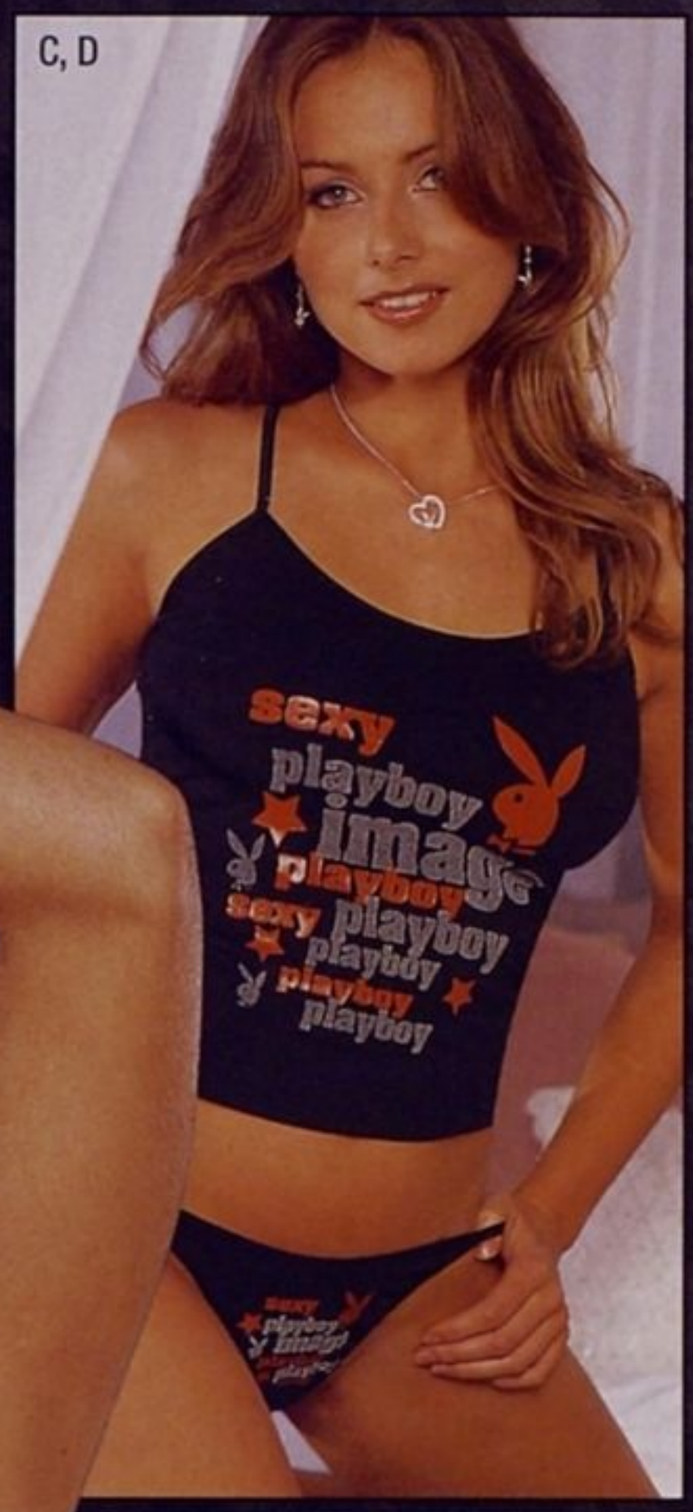
sweet DREAMS



A, B



C, D

E, F

See Miss July 2003 Marketa Janska without her sleepwear in the Cyber Club. http://cyber.playboy.com

A, B. NEW! Extreme arousal. That's what's causing those spots you're seeing before your eyes. And when you get a glimpse of the stripes on the back of the thong, you may need medical attention. Cotton/spandex. S (1–3), M (5–7), L (9–11).
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RAW DATA

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS

Apostles of the Hack

The Church of Ed Wood, which worships the director of *Plan 9 From Outer Space* (considered the worst film ever made), has more than 3,500 members.

Lean Year

39% of Americans would give up one year of their life if they could always remain at their ideal weight.

Outrageous Fortunes of War

As reparations for "lost profits" due to the ongoing conflict, Iraq has paid:

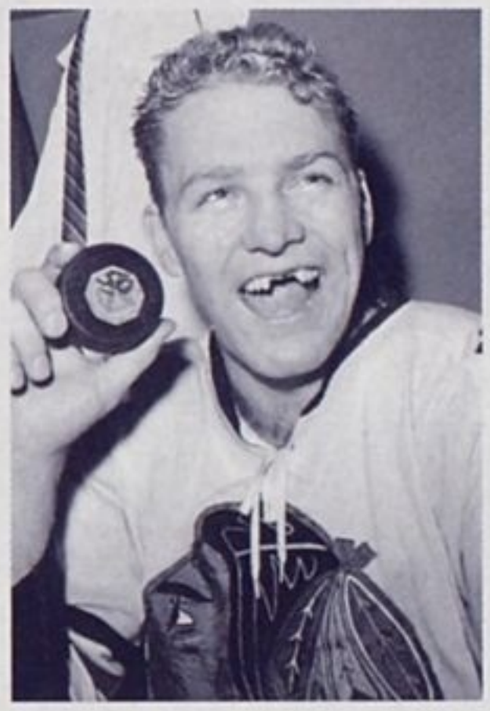
$18 million to Halliburton
$3.8 million to Pepsi
$2.6 million to Nestlé
$1.6 million to Shell
$321,000 to KFC
$189,449 to Toys "R" Us

Time Served

Average sentence a murderer would get if the victim is:

Unemployed
9.3 years
A prior violent offender
9.6 years
Under 12 years old
11.4 years
A black man
11.6 years
A white man
14.7 years
A black woman
17.1 years
Over 65 years old
18.6 years
A white woman
19.0 years

Price Check



A Quick Puck

$575.96

Paid at an auction for hockey legend Bobby Hull's 45-year-old false teeth. Hull said they were lost in a Swiss hotel in 1959.

Wut R U Wearing

30% of men say they send instant messages while naked; only 12% of women say they do.

Church and State

38% of Americans wouldn't vote for a well-qualified Muslim for president. 52% wouldn't vote for a well-qualified atheist.

Money Shot

The last-second spread-beating basket (a 38-foot three-pointer) sunk by Duke guard Chris Duhon in the semifinals of the 2004 NCAA tournament cost bettors $30 million.

Book of Pointless Records

Oldest Working Lightbulb

104 years (and counting), for the four-watt bulb at fire station #6 in Livermore, California. It has been in continual use (albeit interrupted by a couple of power outages and moves) ever since it was first switched on in 1901.

Scum of the Net

The typical PC is infected with 25 spyware programs.

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REVIEWS

movies

movie of the month

[BE COOL]

Get Shorty dances to a new tune

Attitude is everything in *Be Cool,* the further adventures of Chili Palmer, the Miami mobster turned Hollywood producer first played by John Travolta in the 1995 hit *Get Shorty.* This time out Travolta's hipster thug is fed up with the movie business, so he and Uma Thurman, the widow of a skeevy music executive, jump-start their music-industry careers by stealing a young singer (Christina Milian) from such comically twisted gangstas as Cedric the Entertainer (a music kingpin who lives in a white gated community), André 3000 (his trigger-happy posse member), Vince Vaughn (a playa with a predilection for acting black) and the Rock (Vaughn's gay bodyguard). *Be Cool*'s cast is A-list, but as with *Get Shorty,* what's more important is the film's origin as a novel by Elmore Leonard, the maestro of gritty talk and scalding satire. Having watched Hollywood maim much of his work, the author is ready for anything. "I've been through this too many times to take it seriously," he says. "I mean, the 1969 version of *The Big Bounce* is the second-worst movie ever made, and when I saw the 2004 version I said, 'Now I know the worst movie.' I'm not sure that *Be Cool* is going to follow what I wrote as closely as *Get Shorty* did, but I think this one will be more entertaining and over-the-top with music and comedy." —*Stephen Rebello*

> "This one will be over-the-top with music and comedy."

now showing

	BUZZ	
The Upside of Anger (Joan Allen, Kevin Costner, Keri Russell) Looking for a master class in acting? Check out Allen as the mother of four headstrong daughters dealing with the loss of the man of the house. Complications arise once Mom begins a relationship with Costner, a former ballplayer turned radio host.	Our call: A powerful cast, boosted by Costner's return to a movie-star role, scrubs the sap off this romance from director Mike Binder (TV's *Mind of the Married Man*).	
King's Ransom (Anthony Anderson, Jay Mohr, Regina Hall) This comedy casts Anderson as a rich cad whose gold-digging wife serves him with divorce papers. Apparently the planet's only zillionaire who forgot to get a prenup, Anderson hatches a scheme to get himself kidnapped in order to keep his fortune intact.	Our call: Anderson, who recently had his own brushes with the law, could probably use some belly laughs right now. But he might have to look elsewhere—and so will we.	
The Jacket (Adrien Brody, Keira Knightley, Kris Kristofferson) Brody plays a Gulf war vet slammed into a morgue drawer at a psychiatric hospital. In a drug-induced sensory-deprived state, he time trips to discover that he was framed for a murder, he will soon die and a woman from his past (Knightley) may hold the key to his future.	Our call: Try to look past the blah title and head-scratching plotline. The chemistry between the two stars and the spooky atmosphere should make this more than *Gothika* redux.	
The Ring Two (Naomi Watts, Simon Baker, Gary Cole) In this follow-up to the original shriekfest, Watts and her son try to put behind them all that weirdness about a videotape that kills anyone who watches it. But a homicide and the illness of Watts's son lead our heroine back to a one-on-one with a very pissed-off ghost.	Our call: Watts amps up everything she's in, and the pretzel-like plot and industrial-strength shock moments should scare us all into hoping we'll hear ringing in our ears a third time.	

dvd of the month

[FINDING NEVERLAND]

Johnny Depp soars as the writer behind *Peter Pan*

There are so many places you could go wrong in depicting the genesis of Peter Pan, the eternal boy imagined by Scottish playwright J.M. Barrie in London circa 1904. Yet director Marc Forster manages to sidestep them all in this near-perfect drama, delivering a richly evocative take on the tale behind the myth without going all pixie dust on us. Depp is sublime as Barrie, a man who befriends a beautiful young widow (Kate Winslet) and her four spirited boys, engaging the lads in reveries of fanciful play that inspired *Peter Pan*. Edwardian society frowned on all this, as did Barrie's wife (Radha Mitchell) and the boys' grandmother (Julie Christie). Depp, like no other actor of his generation, can find the balance of genius, joy and innocence that makes it fly. **Extras:** Deleted scenes, two making-of featurettes and a three-way commentary track with Forster, writer David Magee and producer Richard Gladstein. ¥¥¥½ *—Greg Fagan*

THE GRUDGE (2004) The prologue to this *Ring*-esque shocker maintains that when someone dies in a powerful rage a curse is unleashed at the murder scene that spreads to all who trespass. Sarah Michelle Gellar plays an American social worker in Tokyo who stumbles on such a damned dwelling and confronts its vengeful ghosts. Director Takashi Shimizu, who also helmed the Japanese original, *Ju-on,* chills blood with this supernatural revenge yarn. **Extras:** Commentaries, a documentary and a medical feature on audience fear response. ¥¥¥ *—Robert B. DeSalvo*

A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN (1945) Director Elia Kazan's tear-jerking take on Betty Smith's novel concerns a poor family's struggles in turn-of-the-century Brooklyn. Both Peggy Ann Garner and James Dunn earned Oscars, and Dorothy McGuire's performance continues to resonate. **Extras:** A news clip with Smith, a featurette on McGuire and commentary from film historian Richard Schickel. ¥¥¥ *—G.F.*

DEADWOOD: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON (2004) The traditional Western is turned upside down in the lawless gold-mining town of Deadwood, the setting of HBO's slow-building, thoroughly addictive frontier drama starring Timothy Olyphant, Brad Dourif, John Hawkes and Keith Carradine. Beginning with a pilot episode directed by action auteur Walter Hill, *Deadwood* charbroils standard Western tropes and real-life figures (Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane), using language that initially shocks but ultimately elevates the show's intensity. Gambling, gunfights, whoring and dirty double-crossing have never before seemed so cool. **Extras:** Featurette on the real Deadwood, South Dakota and four audio commentaries from creator David Milch and the stars. ¥¥¥¥ *—G.F.*

SAW (2004) Strangers Cary Elwes and Leigh Whannell wake up shackled to opposite walls of a dilapidated industrial bathroom, with hacksaws nearby that won't cut chains, just flesh. Getting ideas? Meanwhile, detective Danny Glover chases clues leading to the Jigsaw killer, whose victims die by their own hands in grisly traps. **Extras:** Commentaries and a Fear Factory music video. ¥¥½ *—Buzz McClain*

LADDER 49 (2004) Director Jay Russell avoids greeting-card sentiments and keeps things blatantly macho in this tale about Baltimore firefighters. Joaquin Phoenix plays a fresh-faced rookie, and John Travolta coasts on his natural gravity as the firehouse captain. The film takes a couple of risks that pay off: There is no villain other than the fiery job itself, and the ending is decidedly non-Hollywood. **Extras:** Deleted scenes, a making-of featurette and a documentary on firefighters. ¥¥½ *—B.M.*

tease frame

Monica Bellucci may be Italy's most intoxicating export since red wine. The former law student made her U.S. debut in *Dracula* (1992, pictured) as a lusty vampire, and we glimpsed more of her as the inscrutable object of desire in *Maléna* (2000). She wowed us as a hooker in *Brotherhood of the Wolf* (2001), a costume-popping Persephone in *The Matrix Reloaded* and *Revolutions* (both 2003) and as Mary Magdalene in *The Passion of the Christ* (2004). Our favorite Italian dish heats up screens later this year in *The Brothers Grimm.*

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the critical collector

[HOW TO CRACK DVD EASTER EGGS]

These hidden treasures are worth the hunt

Legend has it that in 1997 the computer geeks working on the DVD of *Dr. No* (1962, pictured) hatched the first Easter egg—a hidden DVD feature—by planting a tempting martini recipe and the cocktail's history on the disc. It's not hard to find; just go to the special-features menu, highlight the inconspicuous martini glass and there you have it. Hidden features have been encoded in video games for years, but DVD producers have taken the fun to new levels. Built into the right channel of the "K-Billy Radio" graphic on disc two of *Reservoir Dogs: 10th Anniversary Special Edition* (1992) is a secret split-screen version of the ear-slicing torture sequence: One screen shows the scene, the other shows it reenacted by action figures. Put your cursor on the lips on the main menu page of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show: 25th Anniversary Edition* (1975) and you'll discover a hidden third version of the movie, this one in black and white until Dr. Frank N. Furter enters and it bursts into color à la *The Wizard of Oz*. Behind the gag reel feature in the unrated version of *The Girl Next Door* (2004) is a nine-minute sex-education video. Buried in the main menu of the 2001 DVD of *The Beastmaster* (1982) are additional glimpses of a nude Tanya Roberts. If you like music inspired by *The Matrix,* check out the languages page on *The Matrix Revisited* (2001) and enjoy the 180-minute, 41-song "jukebox." You can spend hours stroking your remote, trying to find these ova obscura, but plenty of websites, such as DVDreview.com, are happy to map out the paths to access. *—B.M.*

special additions

Donnie is darker, Corleones face off, and a hoops classic is revealed

Thanks to DVD sales, *Donnie Darko* became such a legitimate film phenomenon that director Richard Kelly recut the movie for a theatrical rerelease last year, a version now available on disc as **Donnie Darko: The Director's Cut.** It remains a natural-born cult oddity about a troubled teenage boy (Jake Gyllenhaal) whose six-foot rabbit pal informs him that the world will end in 28 days. The 20 minutes Kelly splices in here and there make this a clearer and more satisfying cut. The disc also includes a commentary from Kelly and fellow indie auteur Kevin Smith, plus four new featurettes.... Action fans didn't get to see Robert De Niro and Al Pacino—who co-starred in *The Godfather: Part II*—actually appear in the same scene until writer-director Michael Mann brought them together in his 1995 crime thriller **Heat,** now available in a 10th-anniversary special edition. It has five making-of featurettes, including the film's pivotal Pacino vs. De Niro confrontation. There's also commentary by Mann and 11 additional never-before-seen scenes.... The new collector's edition of the beloved basketball docudrama **Hoosiers** gets the special treatment it deserves, particularly through footage of the actual 1954 game that inspired the film's thrilling climax. The bonus disc boasts a meaty documentary, "Hoosier History: The Truth Behind the Legend," and includes 13 deleted scenes. *—G.F.*

SCANNER

THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES (2004) Two Argentinean compadres embark on an eight-month motorcycle trek in this adventure partly based on Che Guevara's 1952 journal. The exotic landscapes prove more interesting than the embellished story. ¥¥½

ALFIE (2004) Swinging limo driver Jude Law tears through a bevy of Manhattan beauties, including Marisa Tomei and Sienna Miller, in this glossy remake of the tough Michael Caine classic. This version squeaks by on Law's trademark wit and charm. ¥¥

BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS (2003) Evelyn Waugh's satirical novel *Vile Bodies* sank its teeth into London's celebutante subculture circa 1930. The biggest laughs in this adaptation come from Jim Broadbent, as a great drunk, and Peter O'Toole. ¥¥½

MR. 3000 (2004) A retired batting king discovers that he is really Mr. 2997 and must return to the big leagues to reclaim his glory. Bernie Mac has a few comic hits in this otherwise corny baseball flick. ¥¥

FANDANGO (1985) In this underrated road pic set in 1971, Kevin Costner, Judd Nelson and Sam Robards star as college grads who take one last wild trip to Mexico before adulthood or Vietnam claims them. ¥¥¥

I HEART HUCKABEES (2004) This dizzying mess of a movie fires comedic buckshot at big targets. It includes a few inspired bits, but the best is Dustin Hoffman's turn as an "existential detective." ¥¥

BREAKFAST WITH HUNTER (2004) Compiled from years of video footage, this compelling portrait of gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson, examines the triumphs and travails of his career. Available exclusively at breakfastwithhunter.com. ¥¥¥

KANSAS CITY (1996) Jennifer Jason Leigh plays a 1930s movie moll who takes a politician's wife hostage in this ambitious Robert Altman film. It's no *Nashville,* but a scorching jazz score and Harry Belafonte's vivid portrayal of a gangster make this worth owning. ¥¥¥

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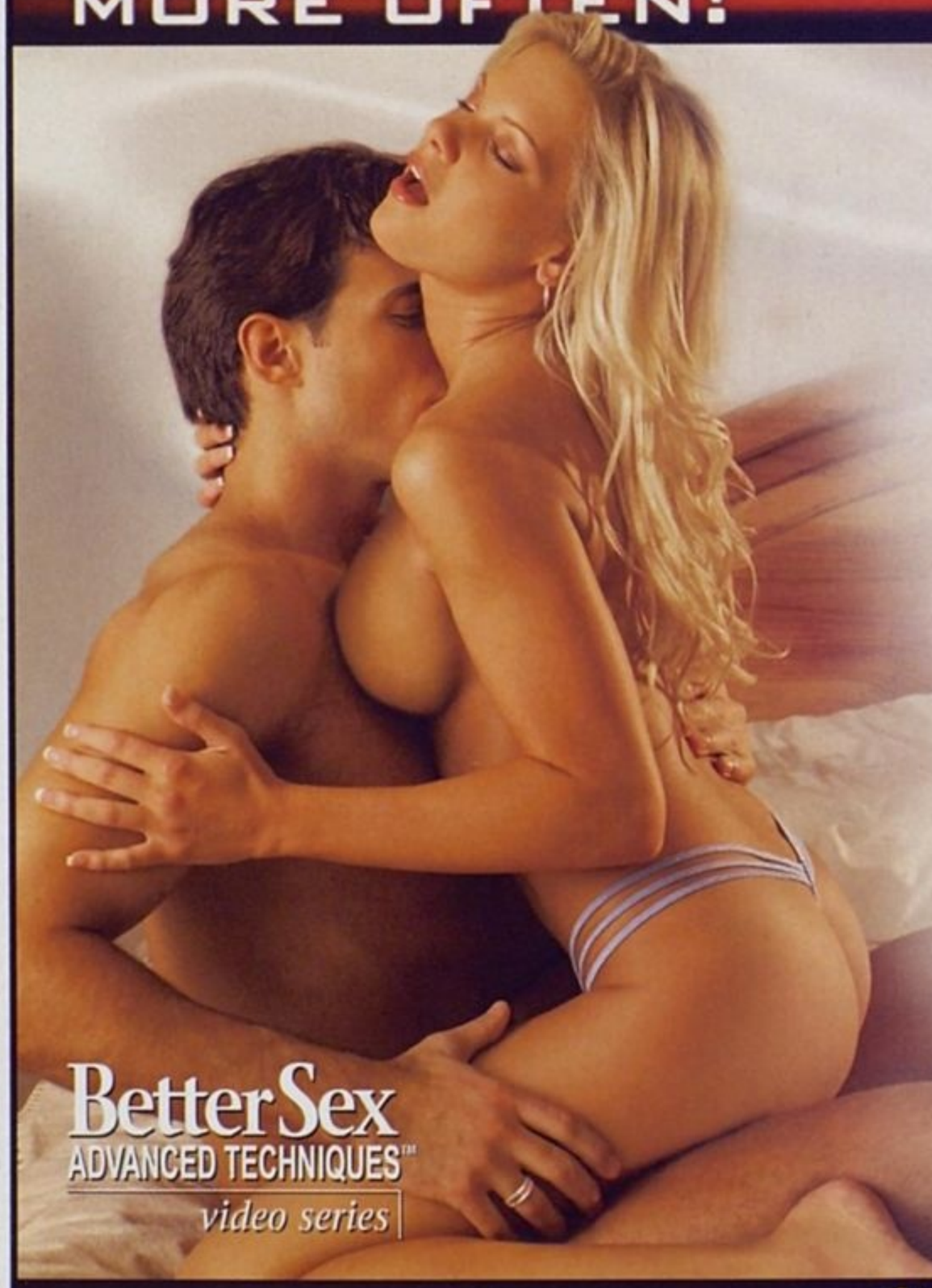

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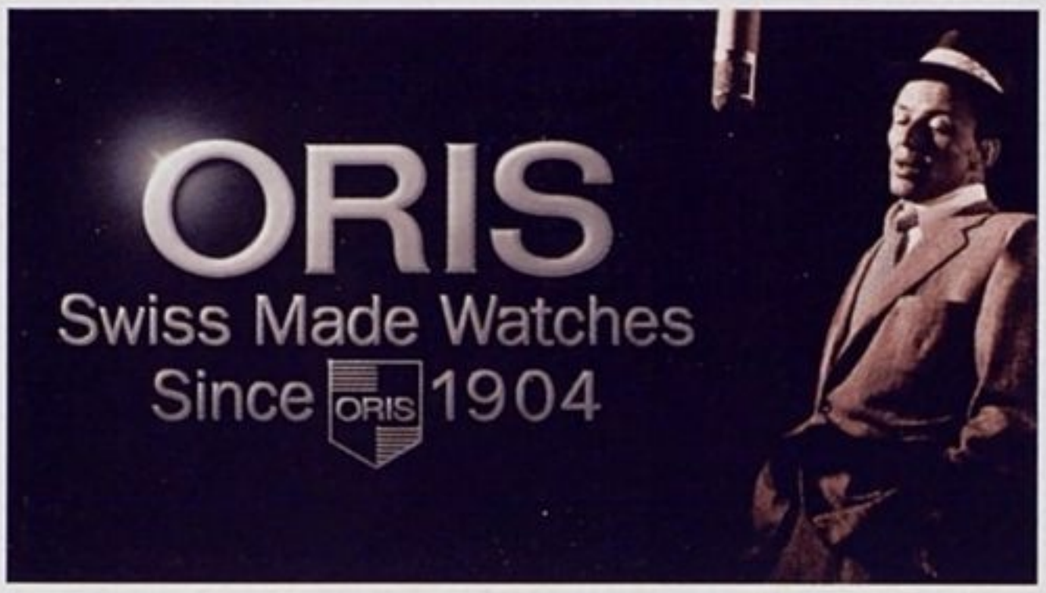

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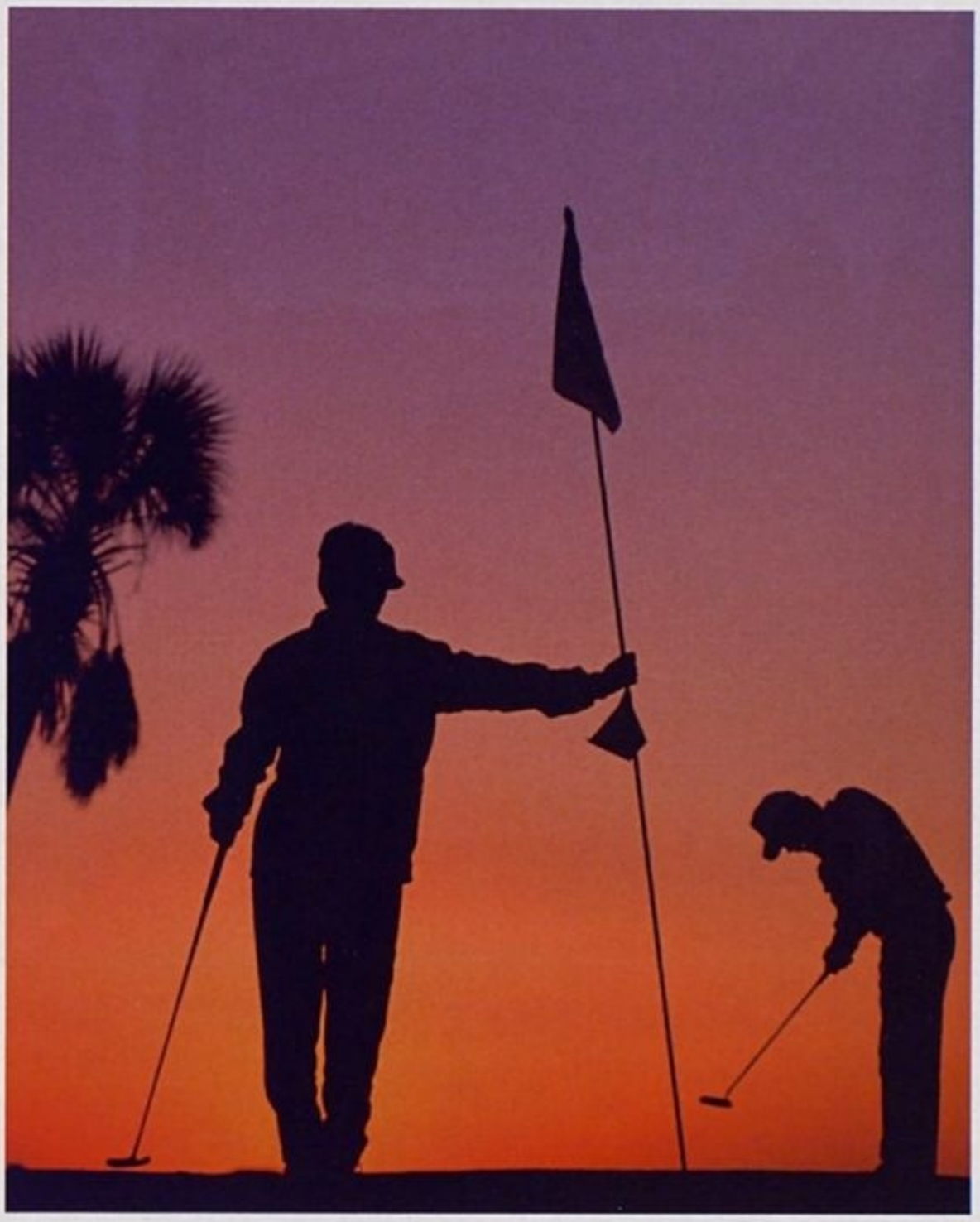

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[MARS VOLTA WIGS OUT]

Two boys embark on an emo-funk odyssey

Just when you've given up all hope that music can still be unpredictable, along comes the Mars Volta with *Frances the Mute,* a shrieking, psychedelic kick in the arse. With meandering song structures and rambling melodies, these former members of Texas emo heroes At the Drive-In (other former members split off to start the rock band Sparta) carve out an even deeper, darker niche than the one they found with 2003's stellar *De-Loused in the Comatorium.* At times Cedric Bixler Zavala and Omar Rodriguez-Lopez get a little too self-indulgent with their drugged-out, sullen tunes. They begin and end the album, for instance, with versions of the track "Sarcophagi." And the more than 12-minute-long song "L'Via L'Viaquez" is a study in extreme patience. (You won't be hearing it on your radio anytime soon.) But it's still interesting to listen as the Afroed duo experiments with various production techniques and trippy vocals—from creepy slasher-movie whispers to Geddy Lee wails. Divided into five sections, this larger-than-life musical journey is not for everyone—not even for some hardcore At the Drive-In fans, perhaps—but that's an excellent thing. (*Universal*) ¥¥¥½ *—Alison Prato*

MANDO DIAO • Hurricane Bar
This Swedish quartet falls somewhere along the arc connecting the Libertines, Strokes and Hives. Happily, the band distinguishes itself with a preternatural ability to write memorable melodies and by striking a perfect balance between unhinged passion and disciplined harmoniousness. (*Mute*) ¥¥¥½ *—Tim Mohr*

UNWRITTEN LAW
Here's to the Mourning
Though lumped with Blink-182 and Sum 41, this SoCal group has always been more sonically diverse. On this LP, stick-and-move riffs blend punk and metal with bits of electronic. As pop-punk wanes, Unwritten Law comes out with its piercings intact. (*Lava*) ¥¥¥ *—Jason Buhrmester*

MARY GAUTHIER • Mercy Now
Gauthier's reputation for world-weary songs and heart-broke singing is already well established. But when she comes up with a great song like "Your Sister Cried," it takes her to a new level. Her bayou laments are sparse and simple, but her artistry is pure and absolute. (*Lost Highway*) ¥¥¥ *—Leopold Froehlich*

THE KILLS • No Wow
It's hard to believe two people could be as threateningly rock-and-roll as this duo. VV—the girl singer—snarls and spits and writhes, while Hotel—the boy guitar wonder—unleashes riffs so venomous they make the White Stripes sound like music for kids. Frighteningly good. And frightening. (*RCA*) ¥¥¥¥ *—T.M.*

THE BIG OL' BOX OF NEW ORLEANS
With the arrival of spring, our thoughts turn to plastic beads and crawfish bread. What better way to prepare for Mardi Gras than with a well-documented four-disc set of new and old Crescent City classics? There are welcome surprises here, but where are Master P and Mystikal? (*Shout Factory*) ¥¥½ *—L.F.*

KASABIAN • Kasabian
Baggy is back. Like the Happy Mondays, Primal Scream and New Fast Automatic Daffodils, Kasabian makes party music swathed in the murky gray atmosphere of Britain's rust belt. Turns out that catchy beats, buoyant bass lines, keyboard bursts and half-sneered vocals are still a winning formula. (*RCA*) ¥¥¥½ *—T.M.*

QUALO • Believe
Far from breaking new ground, most socially conscious hip-hop founders under its own clichés. But with "How to Make a Baby Mama"—funny but not so funny—this Chicago collective takes social consciousness in a new direction. With great production and smart lyrics, *Believe* is impressive. (*The Movement*) ¥¥¥½ *—L.F.*

BRIGHT EYES • I'm Wide Awake
Kid genius Conor Oberst (a.k.a. Bright Eyes) built his following with brilliant dirges of teen depression. Here he ditches the self-absorption to duet with Emmylou Harris and sing about politics. If he's trying to shake the Dylan comparisons, he isn't making it any easier. Amazing. (*Saddle Creek*) ¥¥¥¥ *—J.B.*

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game of the month

[WEIRD WEIRD WEST]

Another excursion to Oddworld, this time as a bounty hunter

The folks at Oddworld Inhabitants like nothing better than creating bizarre, deeply detailed worlds and then filling them with sweet, grotesque and obnoxious creatures. We've waited three years to see their latest iconoclastic romp, *Oddworld Stranger's Wrath* (*Electronic Arts,* Xbox). An alien Western of sorts, *Wrath* seamlessly blends first-person shooting and third-person stealth, with one foot planted in *A Fistful of Dollars* and the other in *Blazing Saddles.* As the titular Stranger, you're a frontier bounty hunter armed with ammo that's literally alive—projectile skunk bombs, rapid-fire wasps and "chip-punks" that taunt your enemies. Though a loner at heart, the Stranger, as the story progresses, is swept up in events larger than himself (and too much fun to spoil here). This is what you get when you mix raw creativity with time and a big budget. Hilarious, addictive and as much a must for film fans as for gamers. ¥¥¥½ *—John Gaudiosi*

IRON PHOENIX (*Sega,* Xbox) This is the first hand-to-hand fighter to allow up to 16 players to jump into the ring (or the colossal temple of the snake god) at once. Though it's light on plot and fairly pointless off-line, against human opponents its wide range of bladed weapons, power-ups and combos makes the action fast and furious. Original modes such as "giant kill" (one player is bigger and stronger, and everyone else tries to kill him) make this a true adrenaline-soaked obsession. ¥¥¥ *—Scott Alexander*

RESIDENT EVIL 4 (*Capcom,* GameCube) Change is good. The new installment of the venerated survival horror series is zombie-free, which, all in all, is good. Leon S. Kennedy (from *Resident Evil 2*) is now a U.S. agent and has been sent to a remote European village to find the president's daughter. Much perforation of creepy townsfolk and fearsome beasties ensues. Cinematic 3D visuals, smart enemy AI and truly terrifying surprises will keep gamers glued to their set. ¥¥¥½ *—Marc Saltzman*

PROJECT: SNOWBLIND (*Eidos,* PC, PS2, Xbox) You are Nathan Frost, surgically enhanced supersoldier. Your mission: Foil a plot by Hong Kong's new rebel government. Riveting cut-scenes outline the grim backstory as you explore life on the makeshift battlefields of 2065 (Buddhist temple shoot-out, anyone?). Meticulous graphics, dazzling weapons, customizable implant abilities and 16-person online showdowns add up to one of the best titles of late. ¥¥¥½ *—Scott Steinberg*

DEATH BY DEGREES (*Namco,* PS2) Game developers, repeat after us: Having a hot heroine does not guarantee a good game. We understand wanting to cast Nina from grandpappy fighting game *Tekken* as a secret agent fending off thugs on a cruise ship. Bikinis, evening-wear—slam dunk, right? But once the thrill of seeing the beautiful woman stomping scumbags fades, the clichéd plot and anemic writing begin wearing holes in your patience. Disappointing. ¥¥ *—S.S.*

handhelds

[PORTABLE MAYHEM]

Sony brings the world yet another must-have gadget

Designed to deliver music, video and games, Sony's new PlayStation Portable sports a 4.3-inch widescreen display and familiar PS2-like controls. Using a new media format, a mini-CD called the Universal Media Disc, the PSP will feature full-length original films, new music and the main event: full 3D gaming. Here's a peek at some of what you'll be playing. *—Adam Rosen*

HOT SHOTS GOLF Up to eight demented duffers can tee off on half a dozen courses. Idiotproof fun on the fairway.

TWISTED METAL: HEAD-ON Multiplayer vehicular madness begs the question: napalm launcher or machine gun?

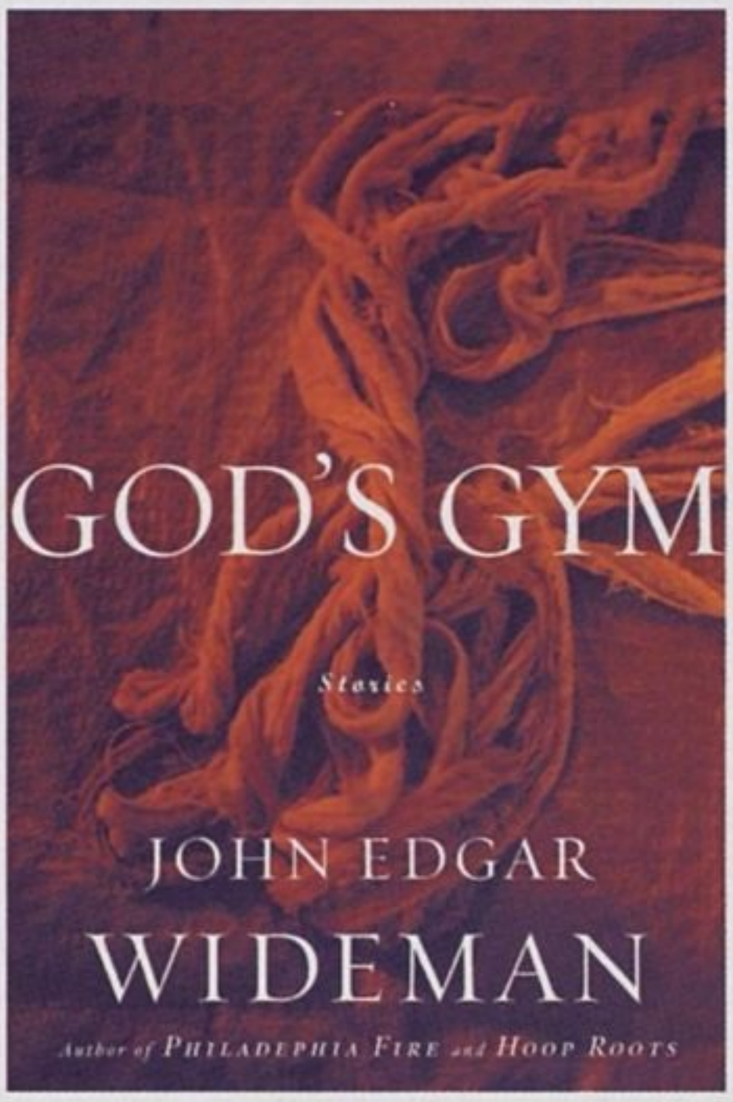
NBA 2005 Get your game on against other ballers over Wi-Fi and play a variety of mini-games and timed challenges.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 147.

book of the month

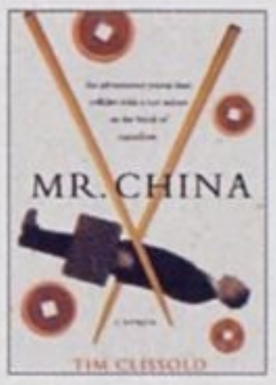
[WIDEMAN'S WORKOUT]

Ten intense short stories from a master of the form



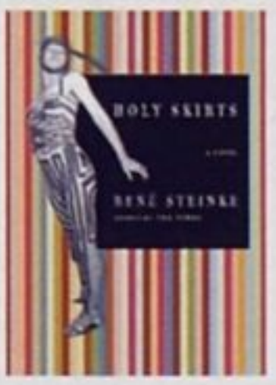
John Edgar Wideman is one of the best American writers working today, and his first short-story collection in more than a decade, *God's Gym,* is full of elegantly written, quirky stories (including one that originally appeared in PLAYBOY). As he has done so well throughout his career, Wideman raises serious subjects with delicacy and even humor. For example, in "Weight" a son says, "My mother believes in a god, a sweaty bleeding god presiding over a fitness class. She should wear a T-shirt: God's Gym." In "Who Invented the Jump Shot," the protagonist, a black man, attends a college seminar and watches as his white colleagues rewrite the history of popular culture by "planting their flag on a chunk of territory because no native's around to holler 'Stop. Thief.'" As usual, Wideman and his morally upstanding characters hold the authority and get the last laugh. (*Houghton Mifflin*) ¥¥¥½ —*Barbara Nellis*

MR. CHINA • Tim Clissold
West stumbles through East in this businessman's memoir. After cleaning up on Wall Street, investment banker "Pat" attempts to do the same in China. As his right-hand man, Clissold quickly discovers that the Chinese interpret the rules of private-equity investment differently. This sets the stage for a surprisingly hard to put down book with passionate characters and vivid landscapes. Clissold excels at analyzing a strange business culture, in which parties are held to celebrate deals that fall apart soon after dessert. He may have failed by American standards, but he succeeds in restoring life to many small Chinese villages and exploring a fascinating culture. (*HarperBusiness*) ¥¥¥

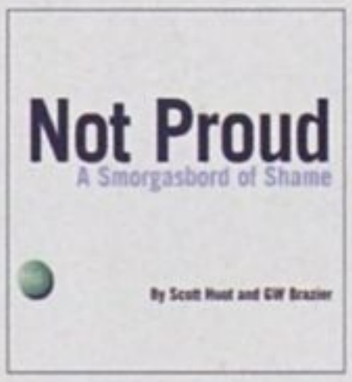


—*J. Jaroneczyk Hawthorne*

HOLY SKIRTS • René Steinke
It's a shame that Vincent van Gogh wasn't appreciated until after he died. It's even more shameful that female artists such as the Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, a poet who was one of the more notable Greenwich Village eccentrics, met a worse fate. This novel reimagines her life from her days as a nude statue in German burlesques through 1917, when she recited her poetry in New York City bars. The story is as much about a starving artist who satiates herself with sex as it is about how World War I affected New Yorkers living on the fringe. The baroness's antics make the Andy Warhol crowd seem tame by comparison. (*William Morrow*) ¥¥¥ —*Patty Lamberti*

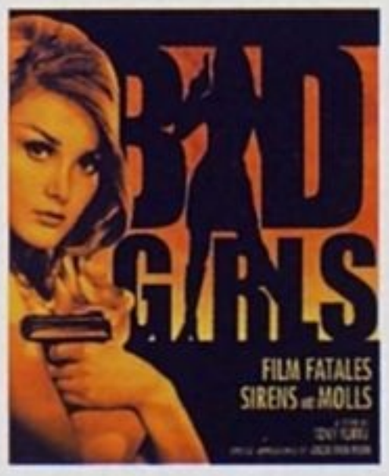


NOT PROUD: A SMORGASBORD OF SHAME • Scott Huot and G.W. Brazier
This collection of confessions originates from a popular website on which people anonymously admit their darkest secrets (or simply make up implausible stuff). Here you can act out your voyeuristic tendencies by reading about the sins and desires of others. The authors organize their book into seven deadly sins, plus a bonus miscellany for those hard-to-define ones. A couple of the more bizarre admissions: "Sometimes I pee into a two-liter bottle when I'm in bed and getting up is just not an option" and "I like to walk in the park at night and fondle the statues." *Not Proud* has it share of the sick and twisted, but the embarrassing thoughts of everyday people make it human. (*Simon & Schuster*) ¥¥—*Jennifer Berkery*



she's nothing but trouble

BAD GIRLS: FILM FATALES, SIRENS AND MOLLS • Tony Turtu
The author catalogues classic Hollywood vamps, trollops and hussies, and provides trivia about the films and the actresses. Filled with movie stills and lobby cards, the book also includes an interview with Angie Dickinson, who has played her share of schemers. Dickinson's reason for appearing in these guilty pleasures? "You see, I couldn't do Shakespeare, but I could do a saloon girl." (*Collectors Press*) ¥¥½ —*Jessica Riddle*



PERHAPS PEOPLE JUST
LIKE THINGS FROM IRELAND.

ON SECOND THOUGHT...

IT COULD JUST BE THE TASTE.

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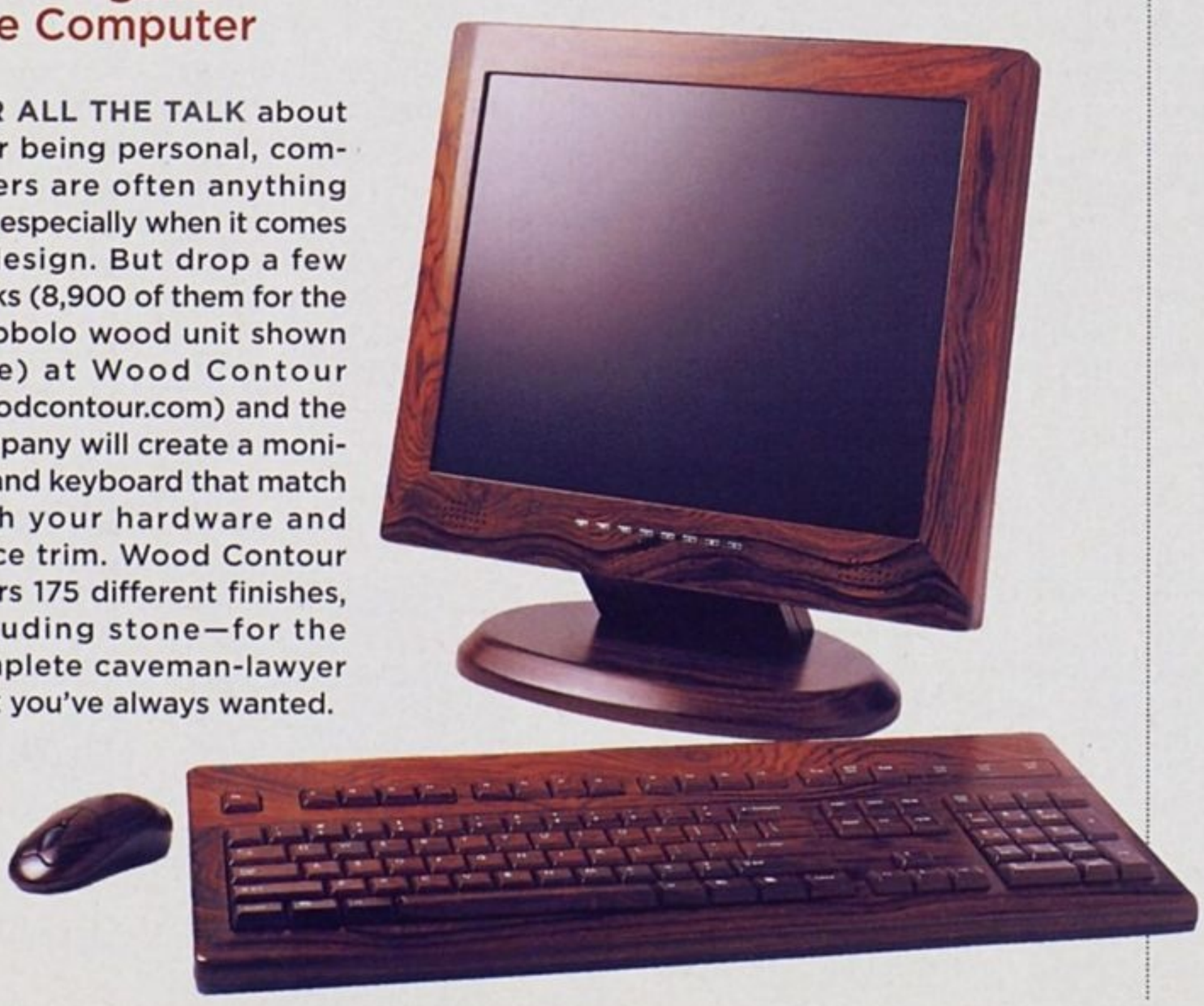
Laser Beem

The new M5 is the hottest, most technologically advanced BMW ever

BMW DOESN'T OFFER a new M5 sport sedan every year—more like every five or six. So when it does, serious players race for their checkbooks. The 2006 model pictured here is already shredding roads in Germany to rave reviews, and now it's coming to America. So what's new? Engineers stiffened the car's suspension, sliced in a set of side air vents and threw on some 19-inch alloy wheels and a quartet of oversize tailpipes. Under the hood lurks a V10 engine (a first in a sedan) that pumps out 500 bhp and 383 foot-pounds of torque. The zero-to-120-mph sprint takes 14.5 seconds, with a high-pitched shriek from the tuned exhaust that'll curl your hair. Also new is the seven-speed manual gearbox, which permits hyper-rapid shifting or fully automatic operation. And get this: BMW has included launch control electronics just like those on its F1 cars. Nail the throttle and the M5 hammers out a series of to-the-redline 65-millisecond snap shifts. "Got your seat belt on, sweetheart? Here we go." Look for it in showrooms this fall for about $90K.

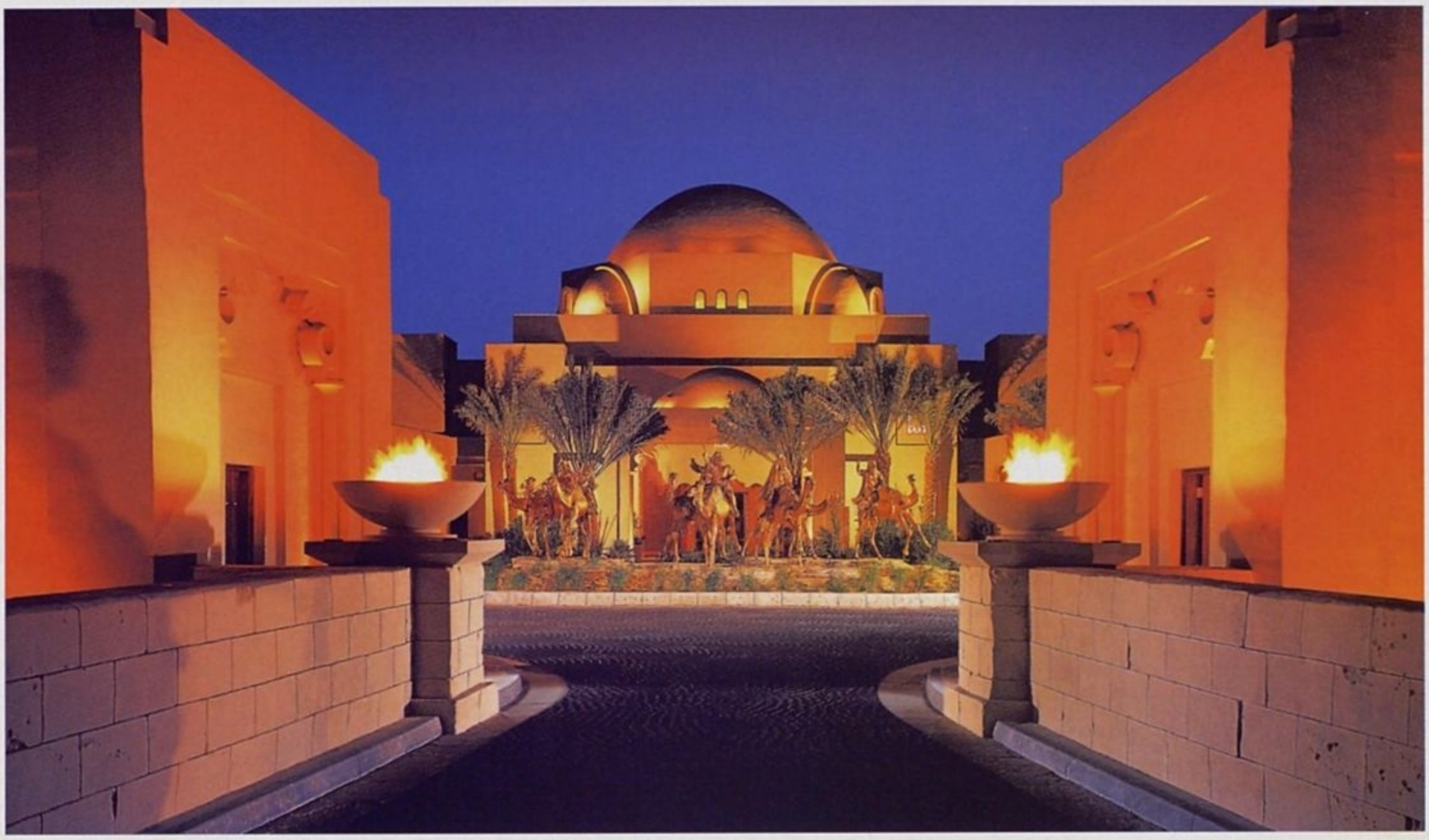
Think Again: The Computer

FOR ALL THE TALK about their being personal, computers are often anything but, especially when it comes to design. But drop a few bucks (8,900 of them for the cocobolo wood unit shown here) at Wood Contour (woodcontour.com) and the company will create a monitor and keyboard that match both your hardware and office trim. Wood Contour offers 175 different finishes, including stone—for the complete caveman-lawyer look you've always wanted.



About Time: Luminox F-16

EVEN WITH the lights off she should look good. Your watch, that is. Luminox teamed with Lockheed Martin (builder of the F-16 fighter jet) to bring you the F-16 chronograph. The little number has tiny tritium lights built into the face so pilots can tell time in pitch blackness. It also makes for a good wingman in a dark bar.



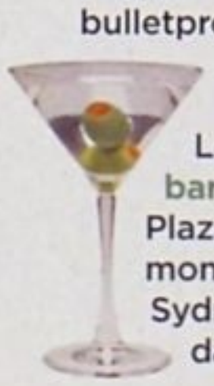
Arabian Nights

Welcome to the city-state of Dubai, where the local sheikh knows how to party

THE PERSIAN GULF isn't exactly known for rocking good times these days, but that's changing in Dubai. The city-state is quickly becoming the Vegas of the Middle East. Okay, there's no gambling, but this member of the United Arab Emirates is constructing outrageous properties, such as an underwater hotel and a glass-encased ski resort with a revolving mountain. And the place is hot for sports. Last year Tiger Woods competed in the Dubai Desert Classic and Jennifer Capriati in the Dubai Tennis Championships, and the $6 million purse in the Dubai World Cup (left), which runs this month, is the largest in Thoroughbred racing. Our pick for the hottest spot in town is the One & Only Royal Mirage (above), a resort that fuses Arabian mystique with a modern, hedonistic vibe. With its domed minarets and torch-lit reflecting pools, you expect Ali Baba himself to slink around a corner in an Armani suit. The resort also features the sexiest bar in the Middle East: the Rooftop, an open-air terrace where exquisite international lovelies lounge on pillows as a DJ spins electronica. Eighty percent of those living here are expats—Arabs, Indians, Thais and Brits, mostly young, on the make and with cash to burn. Emirates airline flies direct from New York City starting at $900 (book at emirates.com); rooms at the Mirage start at $263 a night (royalmiragedubai.com).

Take the High Road

THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE...



Hotel room: The Imperial Suite in Geneva's Hotel President Wilson—$33,000 a night. It features a 26-seat dining table and bulletproof windows. **Airline ticket:** Round-trip nonstop between Los Angeles and London on British Airways first class—$15,750. Includes a full bed and a pass to London's swank Molton Brown spa. **Drink in a hotel bar:** The Engaging Martini at Boston's Fairmont Copley Plaza—$12,750. Includes two olives and a one-carat diamond ring. **Legal hooker:** Twenty-four hours at Stiletto in Sydney, the world's first "designer bordello"—$5,090 a day per lady. That's sex only. Bondage costs extra.

Packing Heat

GUN HOLSTERS see some rough duty, so the good ones are built damn tough. Phoenix-based Galco is one of the country's top leather holster makers, and its sport utility bag ($630, usgalco.com) is the perfect fit for traveling light in heavy places.

Advertisement

HOT SPOT

the inside story on healthy sex

by Jamie Ireland

Learning "The Ropes"...

This month I got a letter from a reader in Texas about a "little secret" that has made her love life with her husband absolutely explosive. (Those Texans know their stuff, let me tell you.)

Tina writes:

Dear Jamie,

Last month my husband returned from a business trip in Europe and he was hotter than ever before. The power and sexual energy that he suddenly had was even more than when we first started making love almost 10 years ago! It was incredible. He flat wore me out! And the best part of it all—he was having a multiple climax. I know what you're thinking: men don't have multiples. That's what I thought too, but trust me he was! And his newfound pow! pow! power! stimulated me into my own intense climax. Before we knew it, we were both basking in the glow of the best sex of our lives!

We tried tantric stuff in the past, and the results were so-so. But this was something new and exciting, completely out of the ordinary. After a few days, I asked my husband what had created such a dramatic change in our lovemaking, and he told me he'd finally learned "the ropes."

On the last night of his business trip, my husband spent an evening dining out with a Swedish nutritionist and his wife of nearly 20 years. The couple was obviously still quite enamored with each other, so my husband asked their secret. The nutritionist told him their sex life was more passionate than ever. Then he pulled a small bottle from his satchel and gave it to my husband. The bottle contained a natural supplement that the nutritionist told my husband would teach him "the ropes" of good sex.

My husband takes this supplement everyday. The supply from the nutritionist is about to run out and we desperately want to know how we can find more. Do you know anything about "the ropes" and can you tell us how we can find it in the States?

Sincerely,

Tina C., Ft. Worth, Texas

Jamie Ireland is a freelance writer in the areas of sex, fitness, romance, and travel.

Tina, you and the rest of our readers are in luck, because it just so happens I do know about "the ropes" and the supplement your husband's Swedish friend likely shared. The physical contractions and fluid release during a male orgasm can be multiplied and intensified by a product called Ogöplex Pure Extract™. It's a supplement that will most certainly trigger much longer and stronger orgasmic experiences in men. The best part, from a woman's perspective, is that the motion and experience a man can achieve with Ogöplex Pure Extract can help stimulate her, bringing a whole new meaning to the term simultaneous climax!

The term used by the Swedish nutritionist is actually fairly common slang throughout Europe for the effect your husband experienced. The enhanced contractions and heightened orgasmic release are often referred to as ropes because of the rope-like effect of release during climax. In other words, as some people have said, "it just keeps going and going and going."

As far as finding it in the States, I know of just one importer—Böland Naturals. If you are interested, you can contact them at 1-866-276-1193 or ogoplex.com. Ogöplex tablets are pure flower seed extract and are safe to take. All the people I've spoken with have said taking the once-daily tablet has led to the roping effect Tina described in her letter.

Aren't you glad you asked?

Jamie Ireland

Jamie Ireland

All About Image

IT'S THE DIGITAL AGE, but you can still pretend you're living in the swinging 1960s with the retro-style OptioMX4 digital camera from Pentax ($300, pentax.com). Beneath the skin, of course, this design homage to the pistol-grip Super 8 is utterly modern, with precision Pentax optics (including an impressive 10x optical zoom) and a 4.2 megapixel sensor (not off the charts but totally sufficient for everyday use). It records onto SD cards, so their size determines your storage. For extra retro flair, make all your subjects smile too big and wave at the camera while remaining silent.

Celebrity Skinz

WE'VE HAD IT DRILLED into our head over and over: The iPod is an aesthetic triumph. It's also oh so 2003. Jazz up your magical music box with Pod Skinz ($50, macskinz.com), which protect your tunes with work by today's top graphic artists, including Frank Kozik, Coop and Joe Chiodo (right). And don't worry about the unwashed hordes biting your style. Each skin is made in limited batches of just 100 units.

This Table's Got Balls

POOL HAS A SERIOUS image problem. Long considered the sport of lowlifes, drunks and hustlers, it's more likely to conjure visions of overflowing ashtrays than of tastefully designed interiors, control and refinement. The designers of o8o Studio have come to the rescue with their pared-down take on the classic table ($7,350, o8o.com). This sleek slab of slate and powder-coated steel may not help your bank shot, but it's guaranteed to improve the look of your game room. It's pool reduced to its barest elements, and what's left is slim, serene and calming—in other words, the way the game ought to be. And if this is all a little too Zen for you, you can always spice things up with a custom felt adapted from any photograph (right, $400 to $500 extra, championshipbilliards.com).

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 147.

DOUBLE DIPPIN'

A

A. **NEW! Styled after the swimsuit worn by Caprice on our March 2000 cover,** these supersexy bikini separates are packed with images of 21 classic PLAYBOY magazine covers. Polyester/Lycra blend. Imported. S (4), M (6), L (8), XL (10).
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10017 Covers String Bikini Bottom $44
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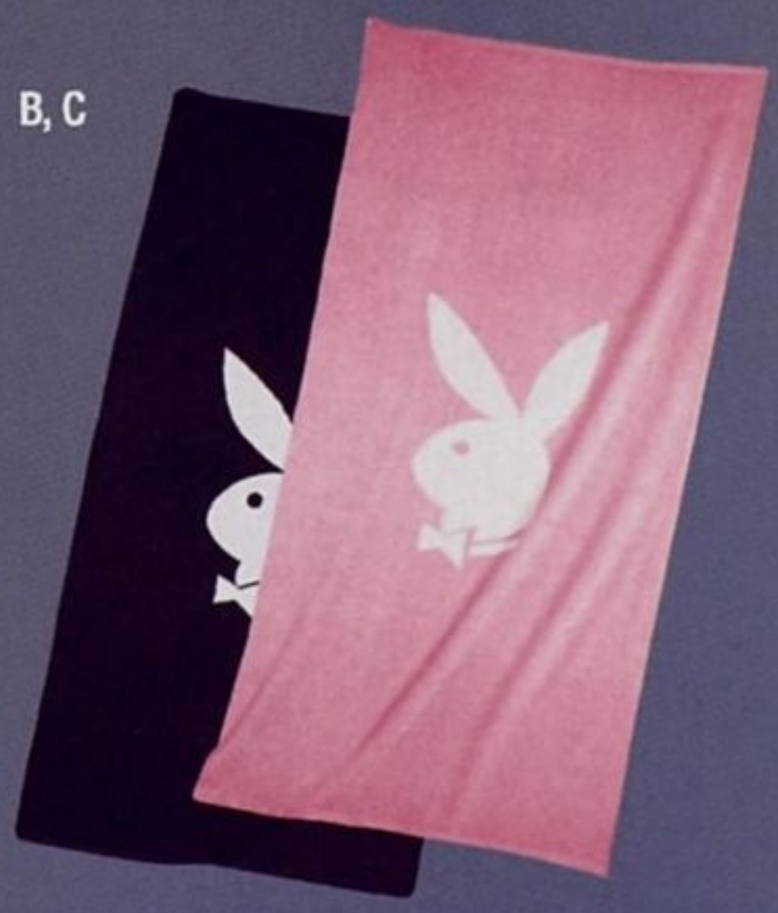
B, C. Find your place in the sun. These cotton velour towels with big Rabbit Heads in the middle provide the perfect backdrop when you're going for the savage tan. Big enough for the beach and luxurious enough for the bath. Prewashed for extra softness. Imported. 35½" x 70".
6730 Black w/White Rabbit Head Beach Towel $39
6733 Pink w/White Rabbit Head Beach Towel $39
Buy both—SAVE $10
6734 Rabbit Head Beach Towel Set $68

B, C



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See Playmate of the Year 2001 Brande Roderick and Miss July 2003 Marketa Janska without their swimsuits in the Cyber Club. http://cyber.playboy.com

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The motorcycle that defined the naked sports bike has raised the bar again. The all-new Triumph Speed Triple redefines the naked sports bike with aggressive European styling and a powerful new engine. The stunning new Speed Triple features trademark dual headlights, minimalist bodywork, massive USD forks, radial brakes, high-mounted twin-sided exhaust, and a single-sided swingarm. Its torquey 128-horsepower, 1,050cc, 3-cylinder engine provides the muscle to back up its looks.

We could keep going but words just don't do it justice. Stop by your local Triumph dealer today for an up-close and personal look at this one-of-a-kind bike. But be warned, one look may have you leaving everything on the road, and at home, way behind.

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The Playboy Advisor

I'm a car-audio installer. An instructor at a training conference told me that clitoral resonance is 33 hertz, give or take, depending on the woman's weight. This means that anything vibrating 33 times per second will cause the clitoris to resonate. Howard Stern made an example of this in *Private Parts* when he got a woman off by having her sit on a speaker, and just about any woman will respond to a bass note at that frequency if your subwoofer can play that low. Is there any truth to this?—J.B., Yuma, Arizona

Don't touch that dial. The idea that 33 Hz is the optimal resonance to get a woman off originated with an experiment performed in 1992 by car-audio consultant Todd Ramsey. While on spring break in Daytona Beach, Ramsey and his buddies spent three days asking women to sit in the front seat of a Honda Accord. The crew then swept the frequencies from high to low on an 18-inch subwoofer, powered by a 1,000-watt amp, in the trunk. The women gave the thumbs-up when the vibrations felt best. Once Ramsey had crunched the numbers for about 100 volunteers, including making adjustments for their self-reported weights, he calculated that the optimal resonance for a woman of 115 to 125 pounds is 33 Hz. Not so coincidentally, he says, that's about the same resonance as an idling Harley or a spinning washing machine. In 2001 Ramsey wrote about the CR (clitoral resonance) factor in Auto Sound & Security. "I'm still waiting for a call from one of the big automakers," he says today. One CR disciple is Richie Warren, founder of Fuel records, which produces bass-heavy music for car-audio systems. To promote Fuel at auto shows, Warren straps three models across the top of a Dodge Challenger and booms a 33 Hz tone "until they're coming all over the car." Visit the label's site at liquidinjuredhearing.com, where you will find a resonator that produces tones from 30 to 110 Hz. Ask your partner to sit on your quality subwoofer, hook up your computer to your sound system and sweep through the tones to find her number (the heavier the woman, the lower the frequency). The only downside is that she may leave with your stereo.

The trainer at my gym set me up with a strength routine that includes two sets of 10 lifts for each of eight exercises. He told me to increase the weight on the second rep. But a gym regular who has been a bodybuilder for 50 years told me that's all wrong. He says I should lower the weight on the second rep. Who's right?—B.W., Mishawaka, Indiana

Raising the weight sounds too much like lift failure—that is, you lift until you can't lift anymore. That can lead to injury and hasn't been shown to increase strength any more than just lifting until it's difficult. According to Phil Wharton, who trains many top athletes and is co-author with his father, Jim, of The Whartons' Strength Book, research has shown that each set after the first delivers only an 11 percent gain in benefit. So a second set is worth the effort after two to three minutes of rest, but the first is where you should focus your energy. A team from the American College of Sports Medicine reviewed 264 studies of resistance training and concluded that novices should start with eight to 12 reps at 60 to 70 percent of the most weight they can lift. When you are able to complete two reps more than your maximum during two consecutive workouts, increase the weight for that exercise to the point at which the final reps are again difficult. This will typically be a jump of two to 10 percent.

What is charisma, and how do you cultivate it?—M.S., Raleigh, North Carolina

Charisma is the ability to make other people feel good about themselves. It requires equal measures of confidence and empathy. It also helps to have a good tailor.

I have been sleeping with a friend for the past five years. Sex always starts and ends with my giving him head. Can a woman blow a guy too much? If I cut back, will it change the way he thinks about me? I think I'm spending too much time giving one man so many blow jobs. I guess I wish he appreciated them more.—C.S., Columbus, Ohio

Appreciated them or appreciated you? After five years this isn't a friendship—it's a cheap date. You won't hear complaints from your buddy, because even routine sex is better than nothing. And while we could give you a long list of techniques to shake things up, those would eventually become routine as well. If you want more intimacy, you need to find a more intimate relationship.

I have one word for the group of "real-life" threesome stories readers shared in November: fantasy. First, the participants were always two women and a man. In my experience, it is extremely difficult to find a woman to play with a couple. Second, threesomes do not happen spontaneously. Everything from the choice of the third to the setting of the seduction through the sex act that starts the encounter requires planning. I started reading the letters with interest but ended up bemused. You need to recalibrate your bullshit detector.—G.W., Long Beach, California

Our detector beeps every time we open the mail. We don't send out investigators or require affidavits, but after reading tens of thousands of letters over the years, we have a good sense of when someone is trying to con us. Keep in mind that we reprinted just one or two paragraphs from e-mails that can go on for pages, including mundane details that don't often show up in fantasies. You didn't read stories involving two men because it's not a three-way unless the men have sex with each other. That happens, but it's beyond our mission. Finally, most threesomes do require planning, but it may take only a few minutes.

My boyfriend wears panty hose in public, even with shorts. He says panty hose on men is a trend. Is he goofy or in style?—J.T., Grand Rapids, Michigan

He may be ahead of his time—except for the shorts. Thousands of men wear panty hose for nonsexual reasons (that is, they aren't cross-dressers). One major supplier is G. Lieberman & Sons, whose chief executive, Steve Katz, began marketing to men in 1999 after trying on dozens of pairs of women's nylons and noting what he didn't like about their fit. The result is a durable hose with a fly, longer legs, a lower waistband and more room for the male package. Katz and his wife launched comfilon.com to sell hose as a fashionable alternative to socks and long underwear for men who have the "nylon gene," or as a practical one for warmth, circulation or to avoid contact with itchy wool pants. They also created a more macho site at activskin.com to target cops, truckers, construction workers, athletes and soldiers in Iraq (to protect against sand fleas). In fact, a pair kept us ventilated and compressed while answering your letter. That's startling only in that we usually go commando.

I am a 24-year-old woman in my second relationship. The problem is that I hate sex. I feel no desire to be sexual with anyone, male or female. I don't like foreplay. I don't like trying new positions. I like it one way, with my boyfriend on top, and quick. I don't like giving or receiving oral sex. I don't masturbate and don't think I've ever had an orgasm, nor do I want one. Between relationships I

ILLUSTRATION BY ISTVAN BANYAI

didn't miss sex in the least. In fact, I was relieved that it wasn't part of my life. I haven't been molested or raped, if that's what you're thinking. I just think sex is overrated and a nuisance. Any idea what might be wrong?—M.A., Fitchburg, Massachusetts

We'll give your boyfriends the benefit of the doubt and suggest that you have a low libido or perhaps none at all. The question is whether you suffer from a physical or mental condition that can be treated (psychiatrists call it hypoactive sexual desire disorder) or whether you are naturally asexual, which is a controversial diagnosis. Brain chemistry plays a huge role in our feelings of falling in love and in lust and long-term attachment—perhaps some people lack the chemicals for lust. It may be helpful to read posts from other people who feel as you do. There's a forum at asexuality.org and even a dating service at asexualpals.com. The online definition of "asexual" is inclusive: It applies to people who say they masturbate but can't feel romantic love and those who say they have never been horny but feel romantic passion. Before we accept the existence of amoeba man, we'd like to see a few proclaimed asexuals in the lab. If scientists ever document a human being with no measurable libido, we'll let you know.

Can you tell just by looking at someone if he or she is lying to you?—R.T., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Most people aren't accomplished enough liars to conceal their guilt. Jack Trimarco, a former FBI profiler who hosts a Court TV show called Fake Out, says you should be suspicious of a person who: (1) changes his usual speech patterns—a person may also pause as he invents a lie or repeat the question to buy time; (2) subconsciously lowers his voice because he's ashamed of the lie he's about to deliver; (3) denies specifics, such as insisting she didn't cheat with the neighbor because the guy actually lives three doors down; (4) remains calm while working hard to convince you that you're mistaken—an innocent person is more likely to grow angry, and his denials to grow stronger; (5) changes the subject; (6) displays conflicting verbal and nonverbal behaviors, such as saying no while nodding yes; (7) changes her story over time ("A lie is hard to remember, while the truth is easy," Trimarco says); (8) avoids eye contact. Someday you may not need intuition to ferret out untruths. A few British insurance companies are experimenting with voice-analysis software to identify people who call in with false claims (initially, about 10 percent have been identified as suspicious), and scientists are scanning the brains of volunteers to see if they can identify which areas light up when a lie is told.

I want to share a technique I use to give my lovers intense orgasms. While she is on top and I am inside her, I ask her to move her hips in a circular motion. Then I press my open hand or fist on the area three to four inches above her clitoris. By doing this, the head of my penis makes direct contact with her G spot, which has given many of my lovers their first ejaculatory climaxes. I thank all the readers who have shared tips, and I hope mine is also useful.—M.W., Silver Spring, Maryland

Have you tried that at 33 Hz?

What are the odds that a guy will date a supermodel?—G.P., Canton, Ohio

We'd settle for a regular model. Gregory Baer tackles this question in his book Life: The Odds. Assuming that the top 25 supermodels date five American guys a year and that the average guy spends 10 years searching, your odds are 88,000 to one. You improve your chances dramatically—to about 10 to one—if you're in New York City or Paris and are an actor, musician, athlete, photographer, producer, director or male model. Using supermarket tabloids, Baer tracked the dating patterns of 44 supermodels and found that this group constitutes 82 percent of supermodel boyfriends. The other 18 percent are nearly all lawyers, doctors or other rich guys.

Can you stand one more comment regarding the reader whose wife cured her hiccups by going down on him? My girlfriend gets the hiccups often—for several hours at a time, two or three times a week. Recently she developed a bad case during intercourse. I was amazed to find that her vagina tightened with each one. Plus, her hiccups stopped the moment she came. It works out for everyone.—H.K., Hartford, Connecticut

The fact that your online nickname is hlover suggests you discovered this some time ago. But your girlfriend should see a doctor if she's hiccuping that much. It could be a sign of a more serious condition.

Why is it so hard to get someone to move out? A college friend moved in with me to help pay the mortgage, but he's a slob and I need him gone. I can't afford a lawyer, and I'm not sure what can be done short of throwing his stuff in the street and changing the locks. Any suggestions?—K.L., San Jose, California

You may have no choice but to go to court. Local laws vary, but in your county and others you must first give your roommate a written 30-day notice. The next step is to ask the judge for an "unlawful detainer action." The sheriff will deliver this document, then remove your roommate and his stuff. Don't do anything drastic, such as changing the locks, pitching his belongings or moving out and shutting off the utilities. That will put you on the defensive and only delay the proceedings. This is true even if the person is related to you. Many people assume that a long-term guest has no right to stay if there's no lease, but that's not how the law sees it.

I'd like to hire an escort. What's the most important thing to know?—L.J., San Antonio, Texas

That you should bathe first. While compiling her anthology Paying for It, Greta Christina asked the prostitutes and dominatrices who contributed what they expect from customers. "Most sex workers don't give a damn about your weight, age, race, physical shape or ability," she writes, "but they do care if you smell bad."

What is the life expectancy of a DVD? I'd hate to put the discs I've filled with home videos and photos into a player 10 years from now and get an error message.—R.F., St. Paul, Minnesota

Your discs should last for decades as long as you handle them by the edges and store them upright and away from extreme temperature, sunlight or moisture. (It probably won't be an issue, because as formats become smaller and denser you'll duplicate the data.) You may have read that DVDs can rot, which is a fallacy fanned largely by a 2003 article in The Sydney Morning Herald. It described the work of failure-analysis engineer Rohan Byrnes, who noticed under a microscope that his DVDs had developed dark spots. But Byrnes says he found the spots only in a few older discs and hasn't seen them again.

For more than 30 years I have kept a log of my sexual activities by date and type of sex and whether with a girlfriend, my wife, my mistress or alone. Over the past five years I have averaged 183 ejaculations a year. Only 25 percent of those were self-induced. My girlfriend, who is in her early 40s, marvels at my appetite. She encouraged me to ask the Advisor if I am out of the ordinary. What is the average activity of men above the age of 55? (I'm 61.) Are there differences by decade? According to my records, my total orgasms have declined about 10 percent each decade since my 20s.—C.B., Atlanta, Georgia

Kinsey would have loved you. Your figures sound about right. The sex drive of most men peaks in their late teens or early 20s, after which testosterone levels drop by about one percent a year. Many guys first notice a change in their 40s. They need more fantasizing and direct stimulation to become erect, can't stay hard as long, produce less semen, have less forceful climaxes and need more time to get hard again after orgasm. But as long as a man is healthy and active, he should never stop being horny or getting it up. One survey of singles over 70 found that two thirds were getting laid. In another, half of respondents ages 80 to 102 said they continue to think about sex. There is hope for us all.

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented on these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or send e-mail by visiting our website at playboyadvisor.com.

THE PLAYBOY FORUM

TOWN VS. COUNTRY

THE REAL WAR BETWEEN THE REDS AND THE BLUES IS BEING FOUGHT NATIONWIDE—AT THE COUNTY LEVEL

BY JONATHAN RABAN

RICHARD BORGE

In 1861 a conservative agrarian society was in militant rebellion against an urban industrial one. Watching the election returns last November, one was tempted to see an image, distorted but clearly recognizable, of the Civil War, as city after city went for Kerry, the countryside was solidly for Bush, and the suburbs—especially the outer suburbs—tipped the balance in favor of the Republicans. It wasn't red states against blue states so much as flaming red rural areas rising up against the big cities, and it was happening all over the country, on the supposedly liberal coasts as well as in the supposedly conservative heartland.

I live in Seattle—secular, lefty, latte-drinking, gay bar–laden, antiwar, Prius-driving, civically smug Seattle—as entrenchedly blue a city as one can find this side of the Hudson. Yet even within King County, which includes Seattle but frays out on its eastern side into farmland, fir plantations, small, squelchy *Twin Peaks*–like towns (much of David Lynch's series was shot in the county) and mountainous near-wilderness, you can see the terms on which the war is being fought on a national scale: the antipathy between urbanites and ruralists, the extravagant mythmaking on both sides, the pitched battles—many of them superficially religious in character—and the damage inflicted on the American polity by the conflict. The angry red heartland isn't a distant region, quartered along the banks of the Mississippi; it's a 20-minute drive from the steepling condos of downtown Seattle.

The urbanites, of course, dearly love the countryside (which they call the environment). Each weekend they fan out across it—weirdly clad in the latest Velcro-fastening sports gear, looking like mobile versions of the ads in *Outside* magazine—to raft down and fly-fish in its rivers, ski its slopes, climb its rocks, hike and mountain bike its trails, watch its wildlife, inhale its valuable air. They're known, by the countryside's inhabitants, as 206ers, after Seattle's area code. To the people who live and work in the environment, the 206ers are much more than a nuisance to be borne and a considerable source of rural revenue: They represent a force of intolerable political oppression.

Washington is a state where the city can usually narrowly outvote the countryside, as it did in 2000, when our present junior senator, Maria Cantwell, a Seattle-based Democrat who mostly funded her own campaign with a fortune speedily acquired during the dot-com boom, beat three-term Republican incumbent Slade Gorton by a cigarette paper–thin majority. She carried just five of the 39 counties in the state, all in urban western Washington. During the campaign Cantwell was painted by Gorton surrogates as a typical big-city elitist; a 206er who preferred salmon and spotted owls to people; a ruthless and uncaring enemy of the timber industry, farmers, mining interests (Gorton's support for a cyanide-leach gold mine in Okanogan County was a touchstone issue), the building trade and anyone who chose to live and work in the environment instead of treating it as a weekend playground. Her narrow win was bemoaned as a grievous example of the tyranny of the city over the countryside—the unreasonable ability of five counties to outvote the other 34—and of the bloated metropolitan leisure class over hard-working ordinary Americans of the kind who don't need to call AAA when they want to change a tire.

Much the same demographic pattern applies in King County itself, where metropolitan Seattle occupies less than a third of the county's total area but can crush rural voters with its sheer density of population. So the city decides what people in the countryside may do with their land, and the county courthouse in Seattle is regularly encircled by wrathful wagon trains of horse trucks and pickups adorned with signs protesting the "sovietization" of rural America. A couple of years ago Ron Sims, the King County executive, issued a moratorium on building new churches (and schools) in the "environmentally sensitive" eastern part of the county on the grounds that a church is a "large footprint item," bringing heavy traffic and other urban ills to the delicate countryside. As far as many easterners were concerned, he might as well have

declared atheism the county's official religion. Sims eventually climbed down on that one, but a string of "critical areas ordinances" has issued from his office, extending "setbacks" around streams and wetlands and forbidding the cutting of brush and timber on as much as 65 percent of a rural property to maintain habitat and protect watersheds. Each ordinance, justified by the findings of "best available science," has brought forth howls of rage from the country dwellers, who like to claim that only those who live on the land truly understand the land and that cargo-pantsed, condo-dwelling bureaucrats are arrogantly abusing their constitutional rights. "Best available science" has come to mean a catchall license to trespass, lecture and dictate, bringing science itself under a cloud of deep rural animus and suspicion of being yet another of those legendary vices practiced in the city.

As the suburbs spread and former logging towns turn into dormitories for city workers, the people who live in these "critical areas" resemble less and less the stereotype of the muddy-booted reactionary countryman. Take the not so hypothetical case of the young veterinary assistant who bought a few acres in eastern King County to realize her childhood dream of having a horse farm and riding school, only to discover that land-use ordinances confine her to a clearance of 35 percent of the property and 100-yard setbacks around the edge of her stream and her patch of wetland. Nothing could be better calculated to convert a lifelong liberal Democrat into an angry Republican overnight. The lash of urban enlightenment over rural ignorance falls on many such backs now.

A decade ago the easterners attempted the classic American maneuver of secession. Armed with a petition signed by 25,000 people, they sought a divorce from King County and independent status as a new entity, Cedar County. After six years of legal to-ing and fro-ing, the secessionists were defeated by a unanimous ruling from the state supreme court. "They took a chain saw to us," the former president of the Cedar County movement told the *Seattle Times,* in a turn of phrase both apt and ironic in view of the chain saw's crucial symbolism in the urban-rural war. It hardly needs saying that supreme court justices are generally big-city types: Of the nine justices who make up the current Washington Supreme Court, seven are from the urban corridor in western Washington, one is from the city of Spokane in the east, and one is from Clallam County on the Olympic *(concluded on page 146)*

SAY A PRAYER FOR SCIENCE

A STUDY SHOWS THAT GOD EXISTS!

By Bruce Flamm

God reaches down from the heavens to influence our health, if you believe a Columbia University study published in the *Journal of Reproductive Medicine.* It concludes that women undergoing in vitro fertilization are twice as likely to get pregnant if strangers pray for them.

The study involved Korean women undergoing fertility treatment in Seoul. Christians in North America and Australia prayed over faxed photos of 100 women. Another group of 99 women received no prayers. None of the women knew she was involved in a study. Yet 50 percent of the first group reportedly got pregnant, versus 26 percent of the control.

That sounds amazing, but all is not as it would appear. Those asked to pray were divided into subgroups: One group prayed for the 100 women, a second prayed that the first group's prayers would be heard and that "God's will or desire" would be "fulfilled in the life of the patient," and a third group prayed that God's will or desire would be fulfilled for the people praying. That is, this third group prayed to improve the efficiency of the prayers of the second group, which in turn prayed to increase the efficiency of the first group, which prayed for the 100 women to get pregnant.

Since no one knows God's will, how do we judge the outcome of such a ludicrous setup? What exactly is the proper dose of prayer? And why would God help patients undergoing IVF when the Catholic Church has declared the technique immoral? The study was conducted (or not conducted—its authors refuse to share their data for review) by an infertility specialist, Dr. Kwang Cha, and a paranormal researcher and con artist named Daniel Wirth, who apparently organized the groups. After Dr. Cha met with Dr. Rogerio Lobo of Columbia University, Dr. Lobo attached his name to the study, and it was then presented to the journal, for which Lobo serves as an editorial advisor. Columbia University and the media would eventually identify Lobo as the study's lead author.

Lobo, then chairman of the university's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, presented the miraculous results on *Good Morning America.* This sort of publicity, which leads to hundreds of fleeting news references, is a triumph for groups such as the John Templeton Foundation that pump millions of dollars each year into faith-healing studies. The federal government itself has spent $2.3 million for faith research over the past four years.

All this optimism ignores a critical fact: Despite almost weekly reports of "miracles" somewhere in the world, no supernatural force has been demonstrated under controlled conditions. If one ever is, science as we know it will cease to exist—why attempt to conduct research if prayers can alter your results?

Faith healers want proof that their concept of God is correct and other beliefs are false. If their prayers yield miracles, it shows that everyone else worships the wrong god. This strategy dates to biblical times. The story of some poor victim of leprosy being cured was never about the leper but about displaying the awesome power of one's chosen deity. Unfortunately, many people today believe they have insight into the will of God. They claim that either directly or through the Bible, he has told them that premarital sex, homosexuality, birth control pills, condoms, masturbation and pictures of nude women are evil. If only they had a scientific study in a respected medical journal to prove it is so.

LAST OF THE KINSEY HATERS

THE MOVIE REVIVES A BAND OF NUTCASES

The film *Kinsey* has done more than educate moviegoers about the science, determination and hucksterism of Alfred Kinsey. Like a bolt of lightning in a classic horror flick, it has revived a long-dormant band of Kinsey haters. They had no platform until the film began to garner critical acclaim; now they seem to be everywhere, serving as "fair and balanced" foils to impugn Kinsey's visionary research and slander him as a pedophile.

Although the haters occupy the lunatic fringe, they can't be dismissed entirely. They have the ears of influential people in Washington and hope to use the publicity to secure funds to research "porn addiction" and pass laws restricting erotica. And they're not above using bizarre rhetoric to get the job done.

Consider the musings of Robert Knight, director of Concerned Women of America's Culture and Family Institute, who in November told a reporter, "Kinsey's proper place is with Nazi Dr. Josef Mengele." This raised eyebrows even among Knight's colleagues, so he backpedaled. "Mengele," he conceded, "is in another class when it comes to crimes against humanity."

But Knight didn't know when to shut up. The problem, he continued, is not so much the comparison but that it wasn't appropriate for him, as "an American gentile," to make it. So he summoned Judith Reisman, "the Jewish woman who first exposed Kinsey's vile 'research,'" to reiterate it. Reisman is the source of the most ludicrous Kinsey bashing. She claims, for example, without evidence, that his research involved the sexual torture of 2,035 infants. In fact, Kinsey's only method was the interview. He reported a number of details about child sexual behavior that he gleaned mostly from adults recalling their childhood experimentation, partly from parents and others who innocently witnessed children masturbating, and in a few instances from pedophiles describing their crimes. Reisman, however, is certain that Kinsey at least encouraged people to abuse children and more likely got in on the abuse himself.

Comparing Kinsey to a Nazi butcher.

This, she says, makes Kinsey worse than Mengele: "Kinsey's torture is a gift that keeps on giving in the broken lives and violated souls who went on to torture others."

And these people wonder why they lost the sexual revolution. —DANIEL RADOSH

HOW PORNOGRAPHY CAUSES BRAIN DAMAGE

In a 2003 Supreme Court decision that struck down state sodomy laws, a dissenting justice observed that, under the reasoning of the majority, obscenity laws should also be invalidated. Antiporn activists, seeing this as a sign that opposing porn solely on moral grounds has no future, adopted a "scientific" strategy, claiming that watching people have sex causes brain damage. "Pornography causes masturbation, which causes the release of naturally occurring opioids," psychiatrist Jeffrey Satinover told a Senate committee. "It does what heroin can't do." Mary Anne Layden, who runs a sexual-trauma program, said porn is worse than cocaine because coke leaves your system but erotica stays forever. Judith Reisman (left) called for funds to study "erototoxins," taking the notion that sex is dirty to the cellular level. A new war on drugs has been declared—and the drug is sex.

MARGINALIA

FROM THE BOOK *Where the Right Went Wrong,* by Patrick Buchanan: "Historically Republicans have been the party of conservative virtues—of balanced budgets, of a healthy skepticism toward foreign wars, of a commitment to traditional values and fierce resistance to the growth of government power and world empire. No more. The party has embraced a neo-imperial foreign policy that would have been seen by the Founding Fathers as a breach of faith. It has cast off the philosophy of Taft, Goldwater and Reagan to remake itself into the Big Government party. Many Republicans have abandoned the campaign to make America a color-blind society and begun to stack arms in the culture wars. The Republican philosophy might be summarized thus: 'To hell with principle. What matters is power, and that we have it and that they do not.'"

FROM A LIST of words that are blocked from instant messages sent to PCs or cell phones in China by a large telecom firm there called QQ: democracy, Christian, Falun Gong, Hu Jintao, human rights, multiparty, oppose corruption, underground church, overthrow, prostitution, riot, sex, Taiwan independence, Tiananmen, traitor.

FROM A REPORT by the Tax Foundation: "Taxpayers in New Mexico benefit most from the give-and-take with Uncle Sam, receiving $1.99 in federal funds for every dollar they pay in taxes. New Jersey benefits least, receiving 57 cents per tax dollar. Other states that receive little spending per tax dollar are New Hampshire, Connecticut, Minnesota, Nevada and Illinois. The District of Columbia is by far the biggest beneficiary of federal spending, receiving $6.59 for every tax dollar."

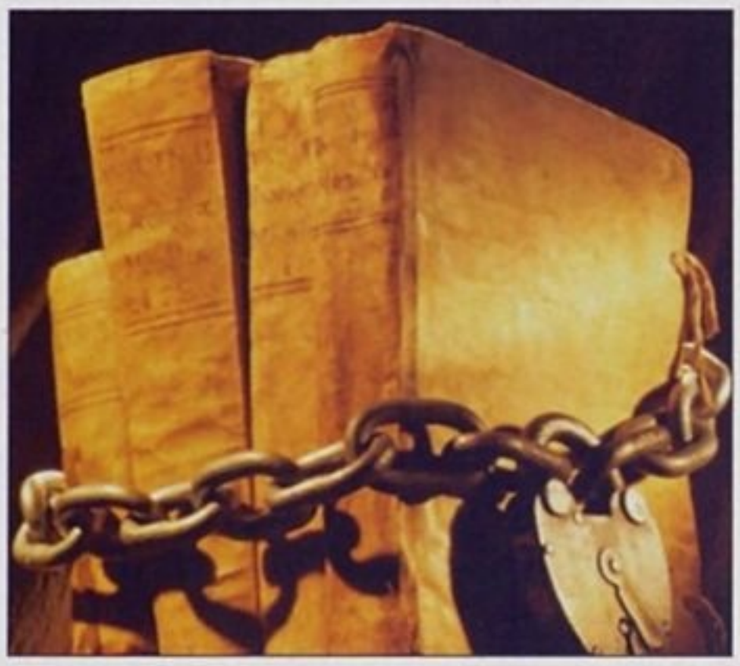
FROM A COLUMN posted online by conservative talk show host Chuck Baldwin: "During the 1990s I was repeatedly asked, 'Do you think Bill Clinton is the Antichrist?' But not a single person has asked if I think George Bush is the Antichrist. Instead many people attribute to him godlike qualities, which actually makes him a better candidate. The Antichrist must be someone who appears as good and benevolent. Bush is being defended, lauded and glorified for everything he does, no matter how unconstitutional or unscriptural it might be. His acceptance by the overwhelming majority of Christians proves the country is ready for the Antichrist, whoever he is."

(continued on page 57)

READER RESPONSE

FREEDOM TO READ

In "Book 'Em" (December), Patricia Schroeder explains how Section 215 of the Patriot Act threatens the privacy of bookstore and library records. We don't know whether the government is using its new power. It refuses to say, and booksellers and librarians are not allowed to reveal that they have received a Patriot Act order. We do know that law enforcement has attempted to obtain records in non-Patriot cases. Kenneth Starr got the ball rolling in 1998 when he subpoenaed Monica Lewinsky's records from two D.C.



Do you have permission to open that book?

bookstores. Denver police issued a search warrant to the Tattered Cover Book Store for the titles of books purchased by a drug suspect. Cleveland police demanded that Amazon.com turn over a list of everyone in northeastern Ohio who had purchased either of two audio CDs, *Cyborgasm* and *Cyborgasm II*. Booksellers and librarians have challenged these actions, but we need to amend the act. That's why we have joined with the Association of American Publishers to create the Campaign for Reader Privacy. PLAYBOY readers can sign our petition at readerprivacy.org.

Salman Rushdie
PEN American Center
New York, New York

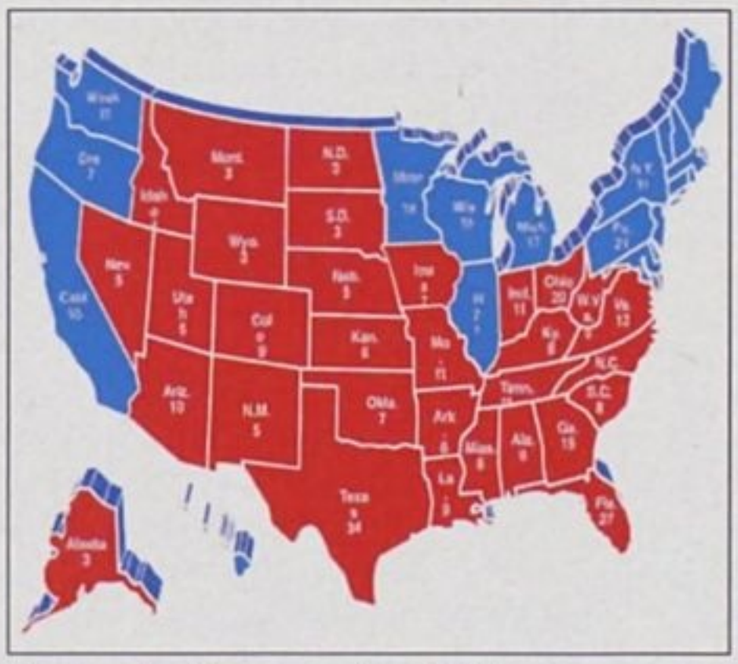
This letter was also signed by Mitchell Kaplan of the American Booksellers Association and Judith Krug of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom.

Many people don't realize it, but the Patriot Act protects cable porn but not the Bible. Section 211 of the act gives privacy protection to distributors and users of cable porn ("such disclosure shall not include records revealing cable subscriber selection of video programming"), while Section 215 offers no similar protection to people who purchase a Bible. Bookstore customers, like cable customers, have made it clear they don't want the government to know what they are viewing, especially when buying books on topics such as guns, addiction, abortion, depression and sexuality.

Phillip Bevis
Arundel Books
Seattle, Washington

FIX THE COLLEGE

In "5 Ways to Fix the Electoral Process" (December), John Anderson suggests abolishing the electoral college. I agree. Our winner-take-all system disenfranchises voters who support losing candidates in each state. For instance, nearly 3 million Floridians voted for Al Gore in 2000, but because George Bush got 537 more votes, he received all of the state's electoral votes. A candidate can thus win some states by narrow margins, lose others by large margins and still win the election even if he loses the popular vote. In a multiple-candidate contest, the system might even suppress the votes of the majority. In 1996 less than a majority of voters decided electoral votes in 26 states. In 2000 pluralities determined the allocation in nine states. In 2004 it occurred only in Wisconsin, where John Kerry claimed the electoral votes with 49.8 percent.



Electoral college results, 2004.

George Edwards III
College Station, Texas

Edwards is the author of Why the Electoral College Is Bad for America.

KEEP THE SAUDIS PUMPING

The U.S.-Saudi relationship may be shifting, and perhaps China is positioning itself to take our place as the favored partner for Saudi oil, but these are not changes about which we need to be overly concerned ("Our Next War," November). Instead we should pray for the stability of the Saudi royal family. As long as it remains in power, the nature of our relationship is relatively unimportant. The world market is one big pool. No nation will sell its oil for less than it can get elsewhere. Put simply, there is no "U.S.-Saudi special relationship" discount.

That's why we can't insulate ourselves

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia: Hang in there.

by reducing our reliance on Saudi oil. Suppose the U.S. imported all its oil from Canada and Mexico. If political unrest in Saudi Arabia were to reduce the country's exports, we would still be affected. Its customers would look to buy oil from Canada and Mexico, which would raise prices. Should fundamentalists take over, the new regime could easily sabotage Western economies. Saudi Arabia produces 12 percent of world supply. Losing this much oil would increase prices well beyond $100 a barrel and generate a severe recession.

Robert Kaufmann
Cutler Cleveland
Boston, Massachusetts

The authors teach at Boston University's Center for Energy and Environmental Studies and maintain the website oilanalytics.org.

PAY THE PIPER

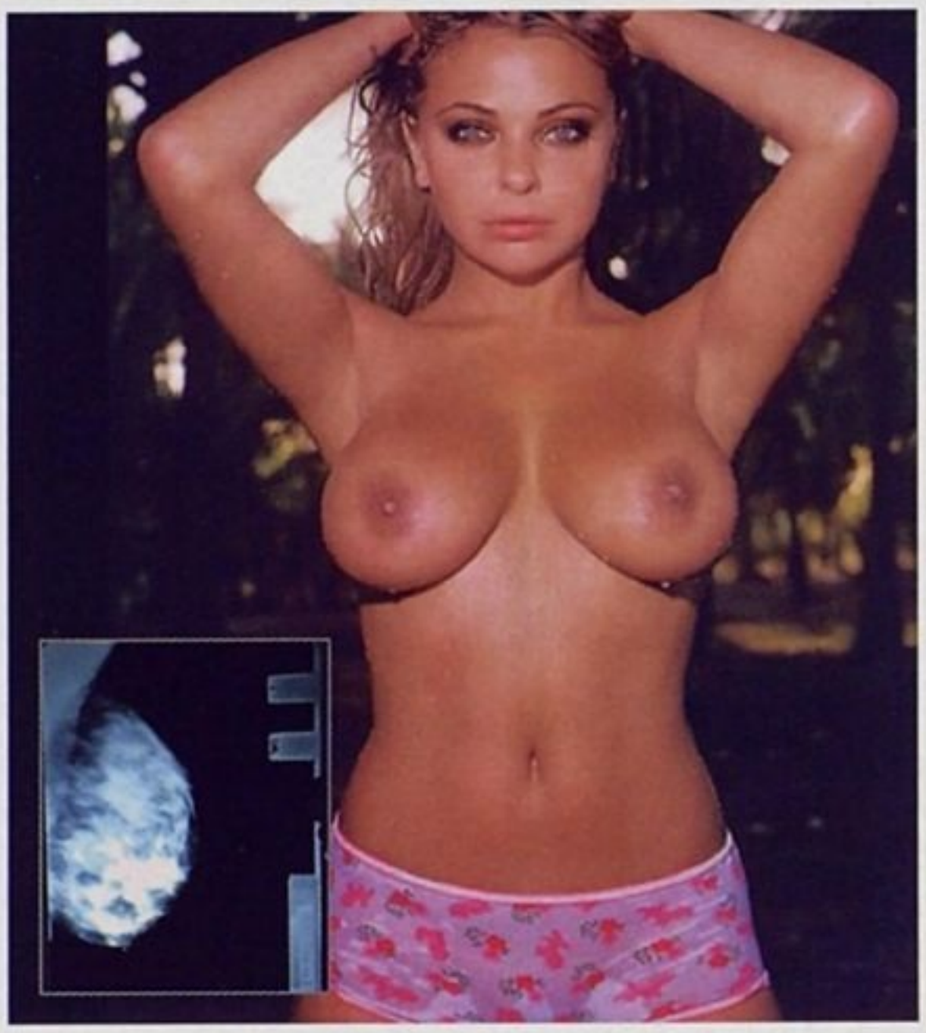
I would like to explain a simple concept to the inmate who wrote in December complaining that Texas prisons had banned PLAYBOY: You lose your freedom when you break the law.

David Teets
Los Angeles, California

That's true, but the Eighth Amendment forbids cruel and unusual punishment.

E-mail: forum@playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

NEWSFRONT



A Real Pair and a Happy Pig

What causes Janet Jackson–like controversy overseas? In the text of her pictorial in the Dutch edition of PLAYBOY, actress Georgina Verbaan claims to be all natural. Several gossip columnists expressed their doubts, noting that she had not always been so busty. "Boobgate" became the talk of Amsterdam until Verbaan had her breasts X-rayed and posted the implant-free evidence on her website. She says her breasts grew because she had gained weight and started taking the pill. In the U.K. Rebecca Loos, a former assistant to and alleged ex-lover of David Beckham, caused a dustup when she masturbated a pig and collected its semen during a reality show called *The Farm.* Three dozen viewers complained to the British equivalent of the FCC that the scene was akin to bestiality, but the agency ruled that it had not been "degrading or harmful to the boar."

When Your Druggist Is a Pill

NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS—Pro-choice groups have taken up the cause of a woman whose pharmacist refused to refill her birth control prescription on moral grounds. He is among a small but vocal group of druggists and doctors who believe that because hormone-based contraceptives could prevent a fertilized egg from attaching to the uterus, they might be assisting an abortion. Only Arkansas, Mississippi and South Dakota allow pharmacists to turn patients away for religious reasons, but legislation is being considered in a number of other states, including Texas. Professional standards dictate that morally challenged pharmacists refer patients to colleagues who will fill the prescription, but some won't even do that.

Zero Sense, Once Again

GILBERT, ARIZONA—Officials at Greenfield Junior High suspended two students for "nonmedical use of drugs" that violated the district's zero-tolerance policy. While inflating balloons for a school dance, the pair had inhaled helium to make themselves talk funny. In Crawford, New York, officials at Pine Bush High called police and suspended a senior for five days after a security guard spotted a rifle in his car. It was actually a musket replica; the student, who is a member of the school's Civil War club, had spent the weekend at a mock battle. Police arrested the 17-year-old on weapons charges.

Who Complains?

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Soon after Janet Jackson's right breast won the 2004 Super Bowl, FCC chair Michael Powell appeared before Congress to report that his agency had received a record number of complaints about indecency in 2003—more than 240,000, up from 14,000 the year before. The figures implied the need for a crackdown. But this past December a reporter for Mediaweek.com took a closer look. He found that 99.8 percent of the complaints originated with the conservative Parents Television Council. In 2004 99.9 percent of the complaints about programs other than the Super Bowl also originated with the PTC. Another reporter examined the 90 complaints that led to a $1.2 million fine for an episode of Fox's *Married by America* (left) and found they had been submitted by 23 people. Fox notes that all but four of the complaints were identical and that only one person mentioned seeing the program. More than 5 million households watched the episode.

Ignorance Is Our Mission

AUSTIN, TEXAS—The state board of education eliminated "asexual stealth phrases" in health textbooks—replacing *partners* with *husband and wife,* for instance—and deleted all references to condoms. Republican Terri Leo also proposed that the sentence "Opinions vary on why homosexuals, lesbians and bisexuals as a group are more prone to self-destructive behaviors like depression, illegal drug use and suicide" be added to teacher manuals.

MARGINALIA

(continued from page 55)

FROM A REPORT in *The New York Times* about a shareholder lawsuit filed against the Disney company over a $140 million severance package given to former president Michael Ovitz: "According to an internal review sought by Disney in 1997, Ovitz spent $76,413 of the company's money for limos and rental cars, $48,305 for a home screening room, $6,500 for Christmas tips and $9,535 for flowers for executive meetings held at his home. The company also paid for Ovitz's subscription to PLAYBOY."

Mouse, Eisner, Ovitz.

FROM A COLUMN by H.L. Mencken in the September 1930 issue of *American Mercury*: "Civilization in the U.S. survives only in the big cities, and many of them—notably Boston and Philadelphia—seem to be sliding to the cow-country level. No doubt this standardization will go on until a few of the more resolute towns, headed by New York, take to open revolt and try to break out of the Union. But it will be hard to accomplish, for the tradition that the Union is indissoluble is now firmly established. If it had been broken in 1865, life would be far pleasanter today for every American of any noticeable decency. There are, to be sure, advantages in the Union for everyone, but it must be manifest that they are greatest for the worst kinds of people. All the benefit that a New Yorker gets out of Kansas is no more than what he gets out of Saskatchewan, the Argentine pampas or Siberia. But New York to a Kansan is not only a place where he may get drunk, look at dirty shows and buy bogus antiques; it is also a place where he may enforce his dunghill ideas upon his betters."

FROM GUIDELINES of the National Rifle Association for the use of $2,650 Eddie Eagle costumes it sells to police to promote firearm safety: (1) Eddie Eagle may not be shown holding a weapon. (2) Eddie Eagle may not appear where firearms are being used, sold or displayed. (3) Eddie Eagle does not speak and must be accompanied by a spokesperson at all times. (4) Eddie Eagle may never be associated with violent activity. (5) Eddie Eagle never endorses any person, product or company. He never endorses any political candidate or party. He does not appear at ribbon cuttings or store openings. (6) Eddie Eagle is always clothed in a red vest and white high-top sneakers. He may not wear a hat or a T-shirt. (7) Eddie Eagle never reveals his true identity. (8) Eddie Eagle is never offensive; i.e., jokes, obscene gestures. (9) Eddie Eagle does not smoke, use illegal drugs or drink alcohol. (10) Eddie Eagle never responds to hecklers.

POLITICAL CURRENCY

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In 1998 Johnny Bitter, owner of Johnny Burrito in Charlotte, North Carolina, started setting aside from the register cash that had been defaced with doodles, slogans or rubber-stamp prints. After collecting about 250 bills, he launched uglymoney.com. "It's a cost-effective way to get your message seen by many people, who, even if they disagree, are almost forced to pass it along," he says. And he's right: The U.S. Bureau of Printing and Engraving says a bill can be folded and unfolded 4,000 times before it's unusable. A sampling of Bitter's currency is below, along with a "gay dollar" posted at cruelty.com and a bill stamped by New York City artist David Greg Harth after the 9/11 attacks. It's illegal to deface bills so they are unfit for use or to place ads on them. That's what prompted the feds to warn Godoffmoney.com to stop selling rubber stamps with its web address and the words KEEP CHURCH AND STATE SEPARATE.

This is the most creative alteration on the Ugly Money site.

If gay America were a nation, it would have a GDP to rival India's.

A variation of this Confederate bill reads GOD WILL VINDICATE US.

Inspired by GAY MONEY, a firearms owner created this stamp.

Washington grew hemp for fiber and perhaps as medicine.

Harth's other bills read I AM NOT AFRAID and I AM AMERICA.

The inscription reads PUNK 4 LIFE. Gabba gabba hey.

Apparently Andrew Jackson referred to Detroit as Rock City.

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: THE ROCK

A candid conversation with the next Schwarzenegger about his first gay role, fighting with violent fans and why Tobey Maguire is no action star

There are plenty of over-the-top moments in Be Cool, the sequel to Get Shorty, which transports Chili Palmer (played by John Travolta) from the movie business to the music business. Cedric the Entertainer portrays the ultimate hip-hop mogul, who prefers to live in a white gated community. Vince Vaughn plays a white guy who desperately wants to be black. But it will be hard for either of them to top the Rock as Vaughn's flamboyantly gay bodyguard; wearing a skintight costume and red cowboy boots, he belts out a version of Loretta Lynn's classic "You Ain't Woman Enough to Take My Man."

It's a rare foray into comedy for Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson, the wrestler turned actor who has been touted as the heir apparent to Arnold Schwarzenegger after scoring big in The Scorpion King. Scorpion was a surprise hit for the neophyte actor (his first role, in The Mummy Returns, lasted a mere seven minutes), and he made headlines even before the film was released when it was announced he was being paid $5.5 million, the biggest paycheck a studio has given to a first-time leading man. The movie's success was even more unexpected because the Rock was the top star in the WWE at the time, and show business has been singularly unkind to professional wrestlers who try to make the leap from the squared circle to the big screen.

The Rock's ring career didn't follow a normal path either. Although wrestling was in his blood—his dad, Rocky Johnson, was one of the first major black wrestling stars, and his maternal grandfather was the famous Samoan wrestler "High Chief" Peter Maivia—the Rock got off to a lousy start. His early performances in the ring as a "baby face" (good guy) named Rocky Maivia, after his father and grandfather, were failures.

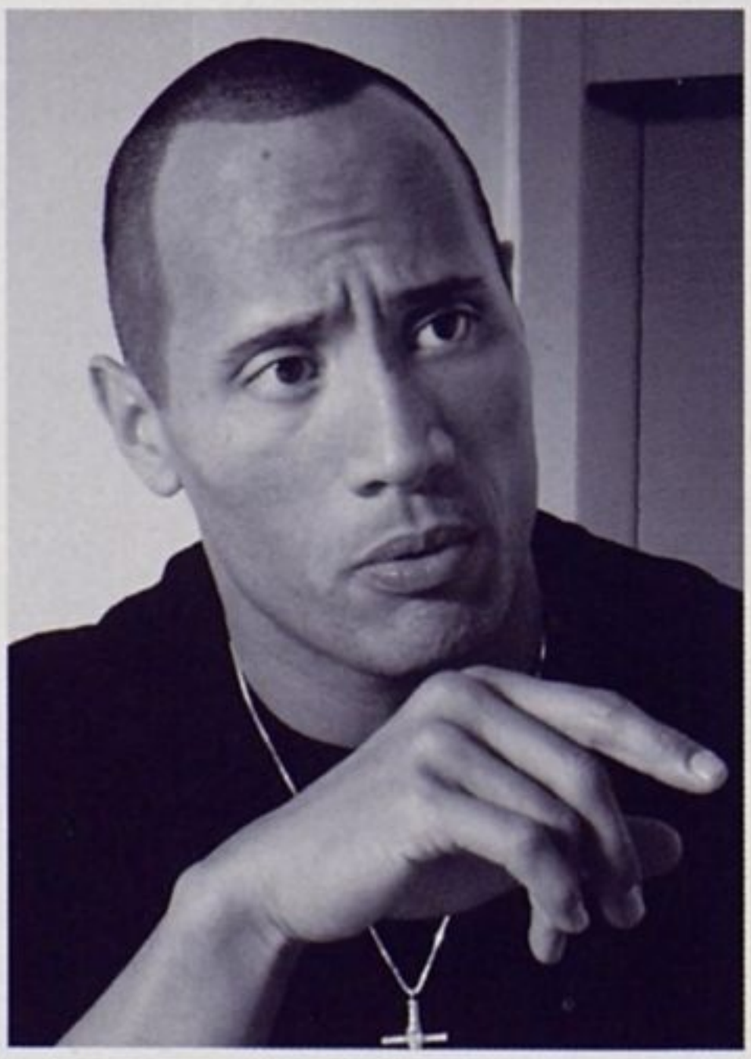
With nothing to lose, the WWE reinvented the Rock as a heel. That's usually the last stop before being fired, but the Rock made it work with the unusual tactic of insulting the audience with comedic rants from the ring. "I became the Don Rickles of wrestling," he said. His defiant and arrogant antihero became wrestling's most popular persona since Hulk Hogan, and his memoir, The Rock Says, became a number one best-seller.

His shaky start in wrestling wasn't his first brush with failure. A strapping six-foot-four and 220 pounds as a teen, young Dwayne Johnson wanted to be a football player. A high school all-American, he played on the University of Miami Hurricanes' 1991 national championship team. A short foray into Canadian football ended when he was cut from the Calgary Stampeders in 1995. Johnson returned to Florida with $7 in his pocket and few options other than trying the family business.

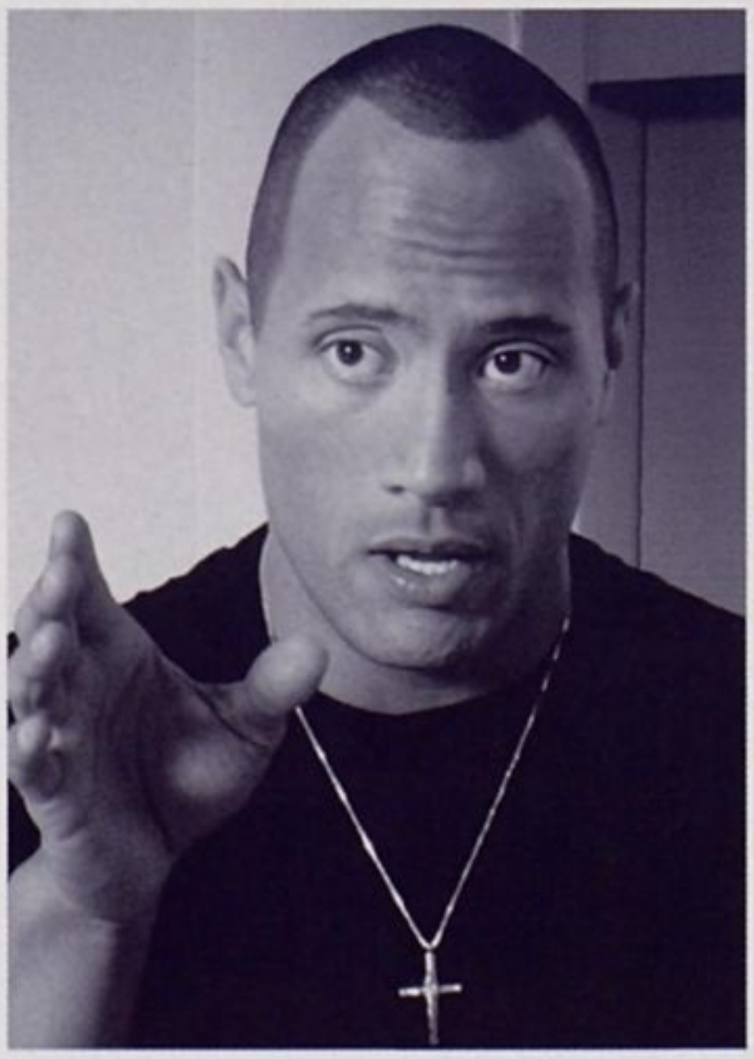
PLAYBOY *sent journalist* **Michael Fleming,** *who recently interviewed Jim Carrey and Quentin Tarantino, to talk to the Rock. The two met in Prague, where the actor was once again in action-hero mode to film Doom, a movie based on the computer game. Fleming reports, "Like Schwarzenegger, who parlayed his career as a bodybuilder into stardom, the Rock is carefully straddling several worlds. He has put wrestling behind him except for rare guest appearances, but he's kept the name that made him a WWE icon. Our first session began over dinner at one of Prague's best restaurants, and the Rock proved to be a complicated subject, sometimes sounding like a guy who wants to be taken seriously as an actor and sometimes coming across as a macho, cocky jock who doesn't care what anyone thinks."*

PLAYBOY: In *Be Cool* you play a Samoan bodyguard and aspiring entertainer. Much to the surprise of many, your character, Elliot, is also gay.

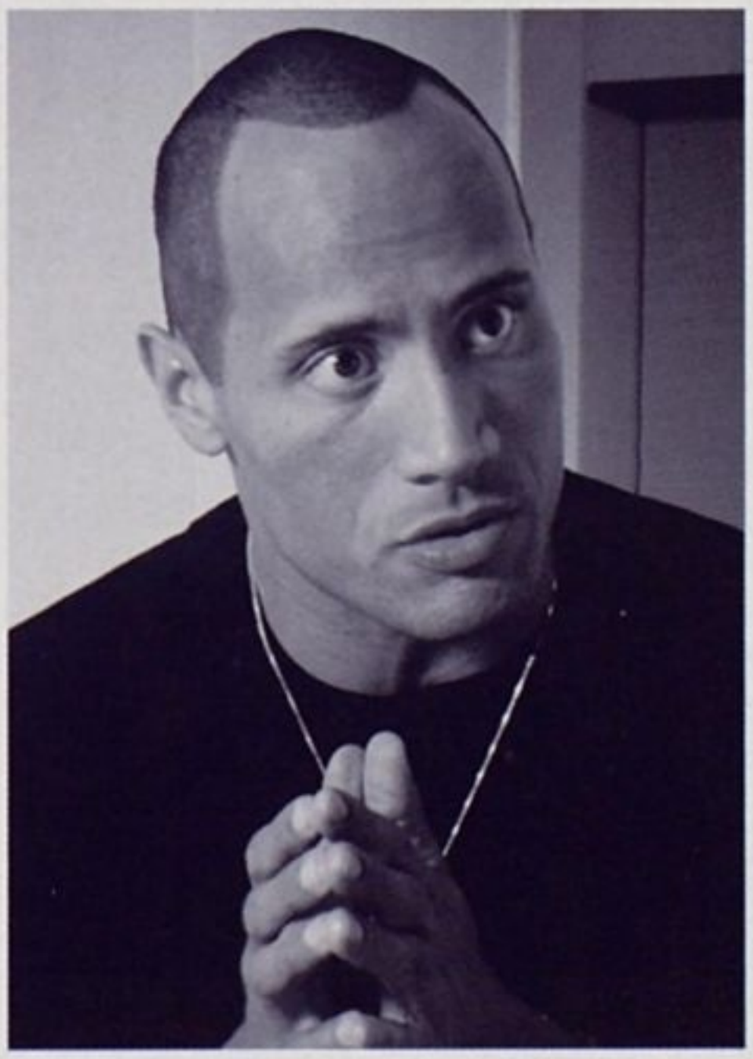
THE ROCK: Elliot was in Elmore Leonard's book. Elmore told me, "I wrote it with you in mind, but I never thought you



"You cannot go into the stands after fans. It is nonnegotiable. I was so hated that when I went into the ring I was bombarded with batteries, cans, you name it. Once, fighting my way through the crowd, I got cut with a blade."



"Men find an action hero believable if they can say, 'Wow, I believe this guy can really kick some fucking ass, mine included.' I loved Spider-Man, but I'm not too sure Tobey Maguire could kick a lot of people's asses."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY NGUYEN PHUONG THAO

"I kept getting into fights. I fought my own teammates. Kevin Patrick, who I'm good friends with today—I tried to pull his tongue out. I don't advise that, because tongues are very slippery. You can't get a good grip."

would play the character if it were ever made into a movie." We were just doing *Walking Tall,* and they sent the script, saying, "Just read it." It was fantastic.

PLAYBOY: Did you have any hesitation?

THE ROCK: Because he's gay? Absolutely not. It was a great opportunity to work with seasoned actors such as John Travolta and Harvey Keitel in a role that required depth. There is a dichotomy to Elliot. He is a proud gay man, but he's also a bodyguard who has killed people and wouldn't mind doing it again.

PLAYBOY: What would you have done if the director said Elliot had to kiss a man on the mouth?

THE ROCK: It would depend on a few variables. What kind of toothpaste is he using? Is he ruggedly handsome like me? Does he have nice lips? Then he might have a shot. A wise man once told me that a warm pair of lips is a warm pair of lips.

PLAYBOY: You camp it up in *Be Cool,* even singing a Loretta Lynn song.

THE ROCK: "You Ain't Woman Enough to Take My Man" is a classic. I suggested it to F. Gary Gray, the director, because I wanted to make the character more interesting. The script had Elliot wanting to be in movies, but I thought, Why not Broadway? Why not sing country? Women sing songs about men. Gary thought it was funny. He even let me do a Polynesian slap dance.

PLAYBOY: Does part of you think your wrestling buddies will never let you live this down?

THE ROCK: They know better than anyone that my goal has always been to entertain. Look, I like doing action—there's nothing quite like blowing shit up. But I also love comedy and movies with a dramatic tone like *Walking Tall.*

PLAYBOY: So far your love scenes have been with beautiful actresses such as Kelly Hu and Ashley Scott. Is that a vicarious thrill for a married man?

THE ROCK: I like to think the vicarious thrill that comes with doing love scenes with gorgeous actresses is one of the spoils of being a leading man. No complaints, but it is awkward with 100 people standing around. Most of the crew will look away during love scenes, but you know a couple of freaks will be staring, hoping to see a nipple or something.

PLAYBOY: Which was more awkward, losing your virginity in *The Scorpion King* or losing it in real life?

THE ROCK: Losing my screen virginity pales in comparison with the real thing. I was 14, in a park in the middle of the night, and right before I was going to show her why they call me the Rock, a cop car appeared, the red light came on, and it was horribly embarrassing.

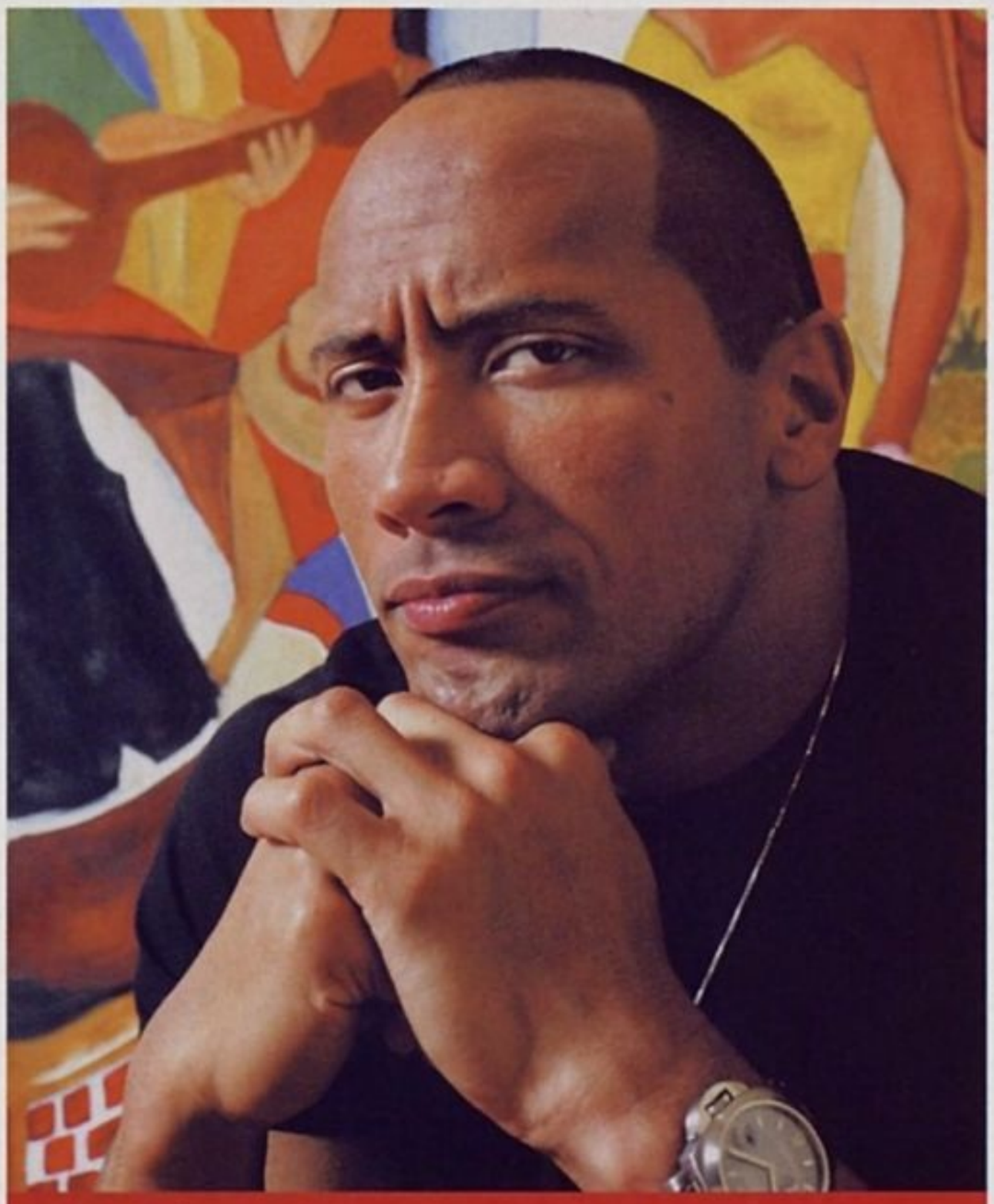
PLAYBOY: To borrow a wrestling term, were you able to execute the pin anyway?

THE ROCK: Not only did I execute the pin, I turned her into a new woman. It was the best 11 seconds of her life.

PLAYBOY: You were mature for your age. Were you a stick man, or were you a commitment guy?

THE ROCK: Commitment guy. Once, in high school, when I thought I was a pure mac without the roni, I tried to pull off every man's impossible dream. I took not one but two girls to the prom.

PLAYBOY: The impossible dream would be to score twice after the prom. Did you?



If I make a movie that sucks, I promise I will tell you. Otherwise it would kill my credibility.

THE ROCK: Didn't even get to try. I wound up in my room at one A.M., just me and my copy of *Juggs* magazine.

PLAYBOY: How many minutes was your screen debut in *The Mummy Returns*?

THE ROCK: Seven, maybe.

PLAYBOY: You were paid $5.5 million for *The Scorpion King,* and you're now making more than twice that. Hollywood is fickle. When *Walking Tall* and *The Rundown* didn't do *Scorpion King*–size business, were you worried?

THE ROCK: It's disappointing. You want it to do well because you put in so much time and effort. But I believed in those movies. If I make one that sucks, I promise I will tell you.

PLAYBOY: You'll warn your audience if you make a bad movie? That would be a first.

THE ROCK: Absolutely. If it's that bad, then I will for sure let people know; otherwise it would kill my credibility. I don't think I'd say, "This movie is shit. Don't see it." I'd probably say, "There are points in this movie that are good and some that are shitty." I appreciate the value of a dollar, and I have a strong bullshit detector. You know that moment when you're sitting in a theater—you're watching and you go, "Oh, bullshit!" I don't want bullshit moments in my movies.

PLAYBOY: Have you become a good actor?

THE ROCK: Decent. My goal was always to get better with every movie and one day become really good. And always to be honest with myself. It's a progression in confidence. I've surrounded myself with good actors and directors who will help me raise my game. I have driven people crazy by being a complete sponge on the set. I've worked with very good acting coaches. I now understand exactly what I want to do with my character in a scene and that I have to execute and own it on the day.

PLAYBOY: When you were making the transition were you tempted by a big check for a bad script?

THE ROCK: This was never about money, because I had a pretty penny by the time the movies happened. Nothing seemed right for me until *The Mummy Returns.* Small role, little dialogue. I thought, Less chance to mess up.

PLAYBOY: Were you surprised you dominated the film's trailer?

THE ROCK: I was just so jacked over the marketing campaign. It was my first movie. I went to see *The Grinch* just to watch the trailer. People responded when it said at the end, "*The Mummy Returns.* Summer." That was my dream come true. I'd been a fan of movies since I was a kid. Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine myself starring in them or sitting here with you in Prague doing the *Playboy Interview.*

PLAYBOY: Why not?

THE ROCK: I try to have clear goals. When I was on television wrestling, film was a fantasy. I didn't go to Juilliard. I had no connections. I entertained people on television two to four hours a week. I aimed to be in a sitcom, which was why I pushed the comedy in wrestling.

PLAYBOY: Were movie people dismissive at first?

THE ROCK: Never dismissive, especially once I met somebody. Some executives were hesitant. That was fine. I knew I'd prove myself in time.

PLAYBOY: How did you do that?

THE ROCK: I remember speaking to Universal Studios president Ron Meyer right around the time of *The Mummy Returns.* I

said, "Give me a shot. Just give me a shot." I wanted them to come watch me in the ring. They all came—Ron, Universal Pictures chairman Stacey Snider.

PLAYBOY: And what did they say?

THE ROCK: They were very congratulatory. They had no idea how I performed live. It felt great to hear that.

PLAYBOY: They thought it was just grunting and groaning?

THE ROCK: They did, and a lot of times it is. To me the challenge was coming up with new monologues. There wasn't much dialogue until old big mouth here came along. That became the part of wrestling I loved most.

PLAYBOY: Hulk Hogan and other wrestlers failed at movies. Why?

THE ROCK: I'm not sure. I know what was important to me—choosing good material, studying, making sure everybody knew I wasn't in it for the paycheck. I'm not too sure if Hogan and those other wrestlers did that.

PLAYBOY: You are considered the newest in a line of action stars that includes Arnold Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis and Sly Stallone. Besides brawn, what do you guys have that makes women love you and men want to be you?

THE ROCK: Women might like the everyman appeal, Arnold's accent, Sly's abs, Bruce's ass. Men find an action hero believable if they can say, "Wow, I believe this guy can really kick some fucking ass, mine included." I loved *Spider-Man,* but I'm not too sure Tobey Maguire could kick my or a lot of other people's asses.

PLAYBOY: Your ring persona was brash, but you are hardly boastful when talking about your screen work. When you were both wrestling and promoting movies, did the Rock slip out and get you into trouble?

THE ROCK: Well, it was awkward when I was asked to compare myself to Arnold and I said I was much better looking.

PLAYBOY: Did he bust you on that?

THE ROCK: Of course. He said [*in a passable Schwarzenegger*], "Vot do you mean you are better looking? I am much better looking dan you."

PLAYBOY: He must like you. He passed you the action-hero baton in *The Rundown.*

THE ROCK: I didn't anticipate an iconic moment, but he said he knew exactly what he was doing. I'd invited him to the set to have lunch, and my director, Peter Berg, walked up and said, "Hey, you want me to ask him to be in the movie for a cameo?" I said, "Yeah, ask him." Arnold stood right up and said, "Let's go." And within 20 minutes we were on the set. Peter was like, "What do you want to say?" Arnold said, "I want to tell him to have fun." Arnold knew early on that I wanted to do this, and he was helpful with advice.

PLAYBOY: You worked with Christopher Walken in *The Rundown.* Everybody comes away with a good story. Give us one.

THE ROCK: We're on the set, shooting the shit, and he asks me, "You like the Stones? They're coming to town." I'm like, "Yes,

"Cut me, Mick"

Other great rocks from American history

1620 Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock, begin work on inventing Thanksgiving.

1863 Steadfast general George Thomas whips rebs, gets nicknamed the Rock of Chickamauga.

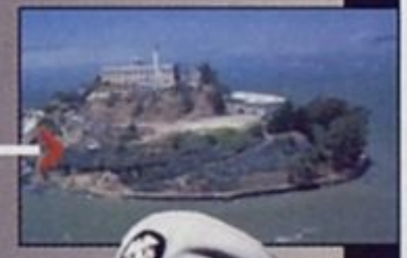
1870 John D. Rockefeller establishes the Standard Oil combine, turns surname into synonym for *rich.*

1942 Besieged American troops hold out for five months on Corregidor, a.k.a. the Rock, in Manila Bay, the Philippines.

1954 Devout Catholic Dr. John Rock helps develop the birth control pill.

1954 Bill Haley and His Comets record "(We're Gonna) Rock Around the Clock," a breakthrough rock-and-roll hit.

1959 Tall, dark, handsome, closeted Rock Hudson stars with Doris Day in *Pillow Talk.*



1959 Sgt. Rock of Easy Co. debuts in DC Comics' *Our Army at War* #81.

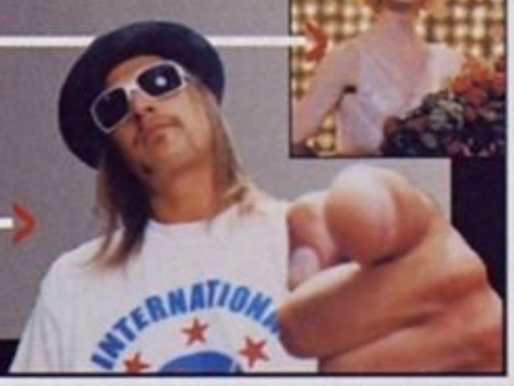
1962 Last escape attempt from San Francisco Bay's Alcatraz, nicknamed the Rock.

1965 A flinty John Wayne plays Navy captain Rock Torrey in *In Harm's Way.*

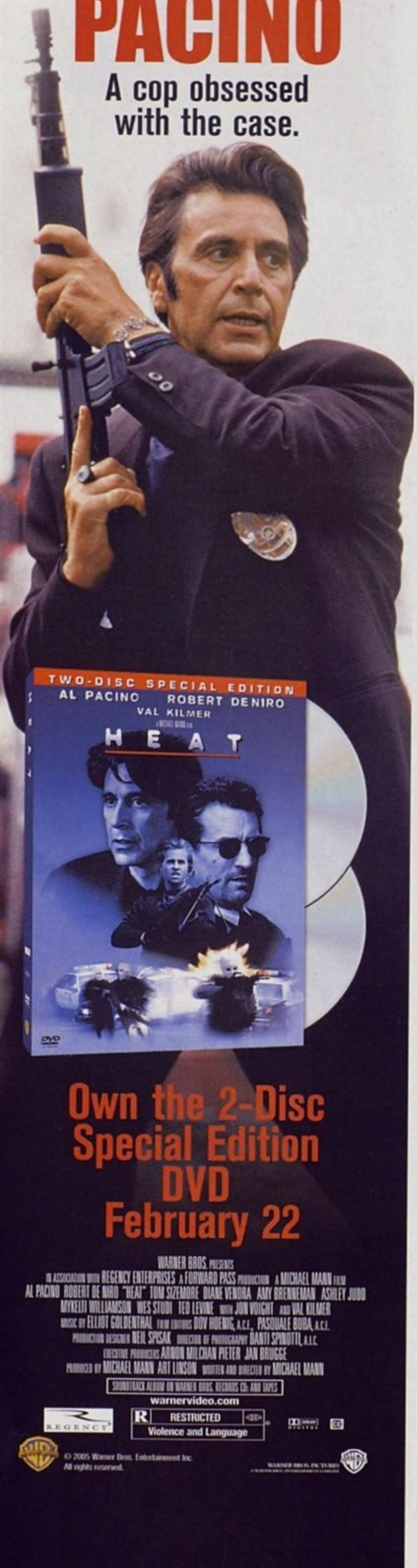
1969 Men go to the moon, come back with rocks.

1976 Yo! Rocky Balboa debuts.

2002 Renée Zellweger's performance as Roxie Hart in *Chicago* earns her an Oscar nomination.



2005 Kid Rock answers PLAYBOY's 20 Questions (page 128).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of course. When are they coming?" He says, "Uh, October 15. They're coming pretty soon. We should go. Can you get us some tickets?" I said, "Sure." It's Chris Walken and I'm excited, so I get on the phone immediately. I hang up, and it dawns on me there and then. I say, "Chris, when did you say the concert was?" He says, "October 15." I say, "Yes, but today's November 12." And this is the genius of Christopher Walken, right? He says, "Oh, November, October, I don't know. Sometimes you get them mixed up."

PLAYBOY: You were Vince McMahon's biggest star in the WWE. Was there tension during your exit?

THE ROCK: Never. By the time this article comes out, I'll be done with him contractually, but Vince and I are very close. We worked together, my grandfather worked for his dad, and my dad worked for him. He's been as supportive as a dad to me. He knew I loved being in *The Mummy Returns*. I told him I wanted to break into films with *The Scorpion King* but that I'd wrestle as well.

I grew up in wrestling. I am proud that my grandfather and dad wrestled. But when I filmed *The Scorpion King* I worked through the week, and on Sunday I would fly somewhere to do *Raw* or a pay-per-view. I had no days off, and it almost killed me. I wanted to give 110 percent to acting, and after that I realized I'd have to choose.

PLAYBOY: McMahon has parted with many former stars and made them leave their ring names behind because he owned them. How were you able to walk away with "the Rock"?

THE ROCK: I was always up-front and honest, never brought in an agent. I sat down with him and said, "This is what I would love to do. This is the deal I would like. It's just you and me." He said, "I have 100 percent faith in you, and I am behind you all the way."

PLAYBOY: He didn't add, "Even though you're destroying my business"?

THE ROCK: He didn't say that to me.

PLAYBOY: But he did get a fee and a producing credit on several of your movies as a concession.

THE ROCK: Sure.

PLAYBOY: Did that bother you?

THE ROCK: No. It was me saying, "I'm under contract, and here, this is for you. Thank you." It didn't bother me. I guess it was money that would have gone to me. I was fine with it.

PLAYBOY: The documentary *Beyond the Mat* shows what became of former wrestling greats like Jake "the Snake" Roberts. He, for example, descended into drug addiction and failure.

THE ROCK: I was sad to see that.

PLAYBOY: It made wrestling seem like a bad business to be in if you planned to age. Are today's stars paid enough to be set for life?

THE ROCK: A lot more are. In the days of Jake "the Snake" Roberts and my dad and grandfather, it was a cash business. They'd get the gate and pay the boys in cash that day. My dad got paid in cash a lot.

PLAYBOY: Why are so many of them broke?

THE ROCK: A lot of them didn't save. There wasn't a lot of financial planning going on when those guys were on the road 300 days a year. You'd pick up $600 or $700 for the week, but you had to pay all your road expenses and drive 2,000 to 3,000 miles a week.

PLAYBOY: What did your dad make in a good year?

THE ROCK: His biggest years came when he was working for Vince. We were up there for about two or three years, and he made an average of about $100,000 or $110,000. Back in the 1980s that was really good. I've got to give it to my old man. I'm half black and half Samoan, and my dad pioneered the way for black wrestlers. Even though the results were prearranged and still are, he was athletic and charismatic enough to be made champion in places like Florida and Georgia. That was quite an accomplishment in the 1970s, working the South in a predominantly white business that catered to predominantly white fans. He won them over.

PLAYBOY: Was your dad a good father?

THE ROCK: Yes, but our relationship went through a very stressful time. He was gone so many years, always on the road from the time I was born. Now I'm lucky to be in one spot, filming on location. My wife and daughter can stay with me. I'm not in a different city every night. Through the duration of his career, he was. All of a sudden he retired from wrestling, he came home, and there was another man in the house. I was 15, six-foot-four, 220 pounds, playing football, coming into my own, very close to my mom. Suddenly he was my dad again. That caused a lot of stress.

PLAYBOY: Did you square off?

THE ROCK: You bet, because at 15 I knew everything, not knowing jack shit. My dad clearly knew more than I did about how he wanted his household run. Yes, we'd square off. Never physically, but it got to that boiling point. Being a dad myself and looking back, I give my dad credit for how well he handled himself. He made it in his business, then went out without a lot to show for it. Then his son became a success. That had to be tough.

PLAYBOY: He didn't retire by choice, did he?

THE ROCK: No.

PLAYBOY: Couldn't get a job?

THE ROCK: Basically. And the ones he got were nightly gigs. The wrestling business is a hard one. You saw in that documentary what happens to a lot of those guys. I was fortunate in the sense that my dad was never on coke, never beat my mom. He was an alcoholic, and he beat it. I'm very proud of him.

PLAYBOY: What was your favorite thing about wrestling?

THE ROCK: The fans. They give me as much energy as I give them. They give it right back to me.

PLAYBOY: When you started out in wrestling

you were a guy named Rocky Maivia. For some reason the fans didn't like you. Did you feel like a failure?

THE ROCK: Very much so. I couldn't understand it. I was thinking, Man, I'm working my balls off, giving everything I have to a business that I love, that I grew up in, and I'm getting this back. So I finally stepped back and said, "Let's assess what is happening here. I'm Intercontinental Champion, a good guy, a hero, and they're chanting 'Rocky sucks.'" I asked Pat Patterson, who was my agent and has seen everything. He said, "This has never happened before in this sport." I was about to throw up my hands. I didn't know what to do. But I've got to tell you, never was I thinking, These motherfuckers!

PLAYBOY: You never resented the audience?

THE ROCK: No. At first I was like, What the fuck? Imagine Madison Square Garden, the Mecca of arenas. You know what it feels like to hear a crowd 22,000 strong chanting "Rocky sucks"? I think I was more pissed that I couldn't go out there and be myself. When I lost a match I had to smile. When somebody said, "You fucking suck," I had to wave and say, "Thanks."

PLAYBOY: Ron Artest and his Indiana Pacers teammates created a near riot when he charged into the stands to brawl with a fan who had hit him with a beer. Do you understand his reaction?

THE ROCK: Only to a degree. You need to maintain a level of professionalism. You cannot go into the stands after fans. It is fucking nonnegotiable. Having said that, I remember when I first turned heel. I became so hated that when I went into the ring I was bombarded with batteries, coins, cans, you name it. I had to leave every night with security covering my head. If I saw somebody throwing things, I made sure security grabbed him and got him out of there. Not only that, I grabbed the mike and talked shit to the guy all the way out. I have been in matches when I went outside the ring and fans have reached over the barricade to grab or try to hit me. At that point it's open season. I have handed out a lot of ass whippings in those situations. When fans go beyond the barricade or come onto the court, they are in your house. Those fans in Detroit were looking for action. It becomes survival of the fittest.

PLAYBOY: Artest avoided fighting after Ben Wallace shoved him. But then he came unglued when hit with a beer cup.

THE ROCK: Artest should have fought Wallace right then. I'm cool with ass whippings that come after a hard foul, in the heat of battle. But getting hit with a beer while lying on the scorer's table? Try getting hit with a battery above your eye and having to get stitches like I did. Back in the day, I'd walk in before 22,000 Texas fans, grab the mike and say, "Finally the Rock has come back to Dallas, and he is here to electrify the largest gathering of trailer-park trash the Rock has ever seen." I'd say that with a big smile. Shit would get thrown. Batteries hurt like hell. But I'd hold it together as I said, "You, fatty, you're gone. You with the Ray Charles haircut, outta here." Once, fighting my way through the crowd, I got cut with a knife or an X-Acto blade. I've got a four-inch scar on my arm. I also got sliced on my back. I've got a cut on the back of my head. When my hair is short like it is in *Walking Tall*, you can see it in shots from behind.

PLAYBOY: How long did it take to win over the crowd after becoming a bad guy?

THE ROCK: One defining week, after I came back from a five-month break rehabbing my torn-up knee. I was a good guy on my way out, planning to go back to law school. I'd gone from Intercontinental Champion to getting beaten on TV every week. Everybody wrote me off, and even I said, "Okay, I gave it my best shot, and it didn't work."

PLAYBOY: You were a failure as a hero. Did you figure your wrestling career was over?

THE ROCK: Absolutely. I try to be real to myself. I was asked to turn heel, and I said I would love to, knowing it was the kiss of death. When you don't make it as a baby face, they give you a run as a heel, and you get beaten every night by a bunch of baby faces. Then you are gone. But I got one last swing.

PLAYBOY: How did you turn it around?

THE ROCK: I asked for a little microphone time. They were like, "Sure, whatever." The week after I turned heel, I went out before a packed house in Chicago. The whole place started chanting "Rocky sucks!" But this time I stared them down like you would if somebody talked shit to you on the street. I had about one minute. The story line was about my joining a faction of bad guys who were black and played the race card. I grabbed the mike and said, "I just want everybody to know I may do a lot of things, but suck isn't one of them. This is not a white thing or a black thing. It's a thing where if anybody comes in front of me, I'm going to whip your candy ass."

PLAYBOY: What did the crowd do?

THE ROCK: It reacted. The response was awesome. Suddenly I was on fire. Within two weeks I was the main event. I refocused on entertaining. And it was like somebody had flipped a switch. People were cheering the shit out of me even as I became the Don Rickles of wrestling. The more I insulted them, the more they loved me.

PLAYBOY: You were in front of a stadium full of fans, wearing tight spandex shorts. Did you ever feel embarrassed?

THE ROCK: Well, once my ball popped out of my tights.

PLAYBOY: Does that qualify, in wrestling jargon, as a foreign object?

THE ROCK: In my case a very large foreign object. Print that! It was unbeknownst to me when it happened, until I looked at one of the production pictures of me lying on my back. I looked down, and whoa! I remember calling the office,

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going, "You guys have got to look at this. Burn that print."

PLAYBOY: What's the worst thing you ever saw in the ring?

THE ROCK: Death. My good friend Owen Hart passed away in the ring. He died in a fall. He was being lowered about 80 feet by cable in Kansas City.

PLAYBOY: Was he one of the guys who helped you make the transition from football to wrestling?

THE ROCK: Absolutely. He and his brother Bret. We were very close because they came from a wrestling family too. Owen was being lowered, and I guess he tripped his harness and fell. His match was right before ours. We were backstage warming up. I had all my shit together, and we were ready to go. And then it happened.

PLAYBOY: The media criticized the decision to continue the matches. What were you feeling?

THE ROCK: Panic. I was right there at the monitor, watching with Vince. My first instinct was to go help my friend. I didn't know what the fuck was going on. I remember telling Vince, "I've got to go out there." Vince was looking at me, not telling me no, not telling me yes. Then it dawned on me. If I went out there, everybody would be yelling, "Yeah, Rock." I didn't want them to think it was part of the show. I decided at that moment that it was best to allow the paramedics to do their job. When they brought him back, I was right there behind the curtain. He was dead. I saw it in his eyes. They were open.

PLAYBOY: He was one of your best friends, and you still got into the ring. Why?

THE ROCK: It was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. He hadn't actually been pronounced dead. They were still working on him. I opened the ambulance door, put him in. Then I had a decision to make. Do I go out there? And then you start to think, I don't know if he is really dead, nor do the 20,000 people here or the millions more watching at home on pay-per-view. Vince told me, "I'm continuing with the show. People at home have bought it, and there are people here. None of us knows what's going to happen with Owen right now." He also told me, "It's entirely up to you what you want to do." I said, "I'm going to perform, and I'm going to pray to God he's okay, pray for his family." I knew they were watching and going crazy. He had a little boy and a little girl. There was so much going on in my head. I was thinking about my own family. After the match I called my wife, and she was crying, "Owen's dead." I didn't know.

PLAYBOY: In hindsight, was that the right decision?

THE ROCK: I don't regret it. I did what I thought I had to do. I found out after my match that he'd passed away. Worst night I've ever gone through.

PLAYBOY: You had good times, too. Compare the adrenaline rush of winning the NCAA football title with winning a wrestling title.

THE ROCK: There's nothing like winning the national title like we did when we beat Nebraska 22–0 in the Orange Bowl.

PLAYBOY: You had anger problems when you played college ball. You once made national sports highlight reels by chasing after an opposing team's mascot. What would you have done if you had caught the guy?

THE ROCK: I would've knocked him into next week and whipped his ass is what I would've done.

PLAYBOY: Was the guy wearing a bird suit or something?

THE ROCK: No, he was the San Diego State Aztec. We'd just gotten into this big fight on the field. The closest thing to me was this mascot who was on our sidelines, talking stuff.

PLAYBOY: What did you think when you watched yourself on TV?

THE ROCK: I thought I looked like an 18-karat asshole.

PLAYBOY: What did your family think?

THE ROCK: Mom saw it. There's no bullshitting Mom. I embarrassed her; I embarrassed myself. What am I doing? I'm chasing a mascot. My helmet is off, and I've got this big Afro. Thank goodness I didn't catch him.

I was living with five guys in two bedrooms, sleeping on piss-stained mattresses. Then I got cut two months into the season, and I realized football was over. It was horrible.

PLAYBOY: Did anger make you a better player?

THE ROCK: No. I always had a short temper. Now I'm direct and talk out a problem. Back then I would just get into a lot of fights. In Hawaii I got arrested a bunch of times.

PLAYBOY: When was the last time you got truly angry?

THE ROCK: I almost got into a big fucking fight when I was on *Punk'd*.

PLAYBOY: That's the one when Ashton Kutcher blew up your trailer and then blamed you.

THE ROCK: They play it a zillion times now. One guy was talking to the cop and fucking with me, getting in my space. I thought he was going to take a swing at me. I pushed the cop, going after this guy. I've been arrested seven or eight times for fighting, so I thought I was going to get the nightstick. I was pissed. The guy claimed I was responsible. He fired a girl right in front of me and then blamed me. I said, "You don't know me, so just step back." Then it looked like the guy and the cop were in cahoots. They were actors, so of course they were, but at the time I was thinking, These motherfuckers know each other, and they're fucking with me. The guy tapped the cop and said, "You'd better talk to him before——" and I said, "Excuse me, before you do what?" It became very real then. I almost lost it. My *Be Cool* director stepped in and screamed, "No, no, no, Dwayne. You're being *Punk'd*!" He was fucking terrified. My man saw his whole movie about to go up in flames. I laughed later when I realized how much it took to pull off the prank. But mostly I was relieved. I've got so much to lose.

PLAYBOY: Was your teenage anger just pure rage?

THE ROCK: No. It wasn't like a blackout. The thing is, I never started trouble, but I had no problem finishing it. And I was with the wrong crowd when I was younger. It's a good thing we left Hawaii. I wasn't getting arrested in college, but I kept getting into fights. I fought my own teammates. Kevin Patrick, who I'm good friends with today—I tried to pull his tongue out. I don't advise that, because tongues are very slippery. You can't get a good grip.

PLAYBOY: Also there's an annoying set of teeth.

THE ROCK: Don't I know. He bit my hand. Look, I've still got a scar. Some of it was being an aggressive guy in an aggressive sport, competing every day for your job.

PLAYBOY: You were close to flunking then, weren't you?

THE ROCK: I had a 0.7 grade point average. You have to work to get 0.7. Not go to class, leave school without taking your midterms—that will get you 0.7. It will also put you in danger of losing a scholarship worth $100,000. And it guarantees a fresh ass whipping from your mom when you get home. I wasn't playing, because I'd been injured and had surgery. This was after it looked like I'd be the only freshman playing. Then I dislocated my shoulder, tore all the ligaments and was out for the year. I distanced myself from the team and fell into depression. I was homesick, didn't go to class, hated life, didn't take the midterms.

PLAYBOY: Yet you hung in there?

THE ROCK: I went back, and it was embarrassing. I had to get notes from every professor to show the coaches that I was in class. I thought of myself as a responsible guy with goals, and I had to show these papers like I was some little kid. But I did okay. I wound up going from academic probation to academic captain and having a decent GPA by the time I graduated.

PLAYBOY: A shoulder and back injury kept you from being drafted by the NFL. Had you not been injured, could you have made it?

THE ROCK: I don't think so. Once I'd played with Warren Sapp, Ray Lewis and some other guys, I could see they had something special. We were all fast and strong, but they had something extra and instinctive that I didn't.

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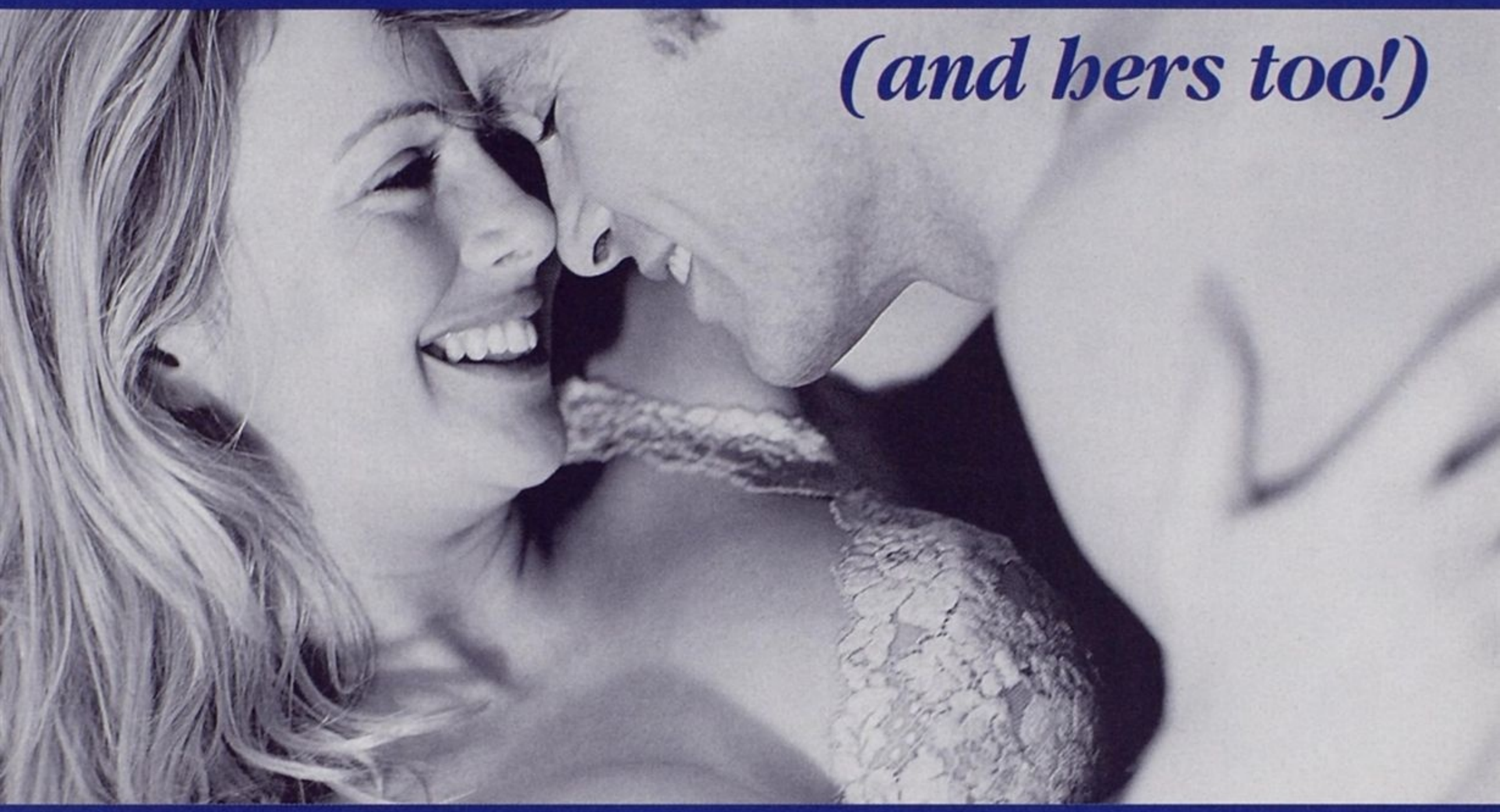

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4. Make funny jokes–humor will help alleviate her hunger pains.

5. Never say, "Hey, I've got a camera. You got a bikini?"

6. If the wind is stronger than 10mph, hold her hand tightly.

7. If it comes up, claim that you live with your parents for "their sake."

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PLAYBOY: But you still tried.

THE ROCK: I'd spent six, seven years playing. Going into my senior year I was all-American. I got hurt, and Warren took my place. I had a dismal fucking year, and I didn't get drafted or get a free-agent contract. But the CFL came calling. I figured I'd use it as a stepping-stone to the NFL. It was horrible. It was hands down the worst period in my life.

PLAYBOY: Why?

THE ROCK: I'd left home at 18, and I was the first in my family to graduate. My parents were proud. Friends like Warren Sapp were playing football for millions of dollars. I wanted to take care of my girlfriend and buy my mom and dad their first house.

PLAYBOY: Was your father finished with wrestling by then?

THE ROCK: Out of the business. My parents had a cleaning company, cleaning whatever they could—office buildings, toilets, whatever. And I went up and was making $300 Canadian, not enough to send money home to parents who were struggling like a motherfucker. I was living with five guys in two bedrooms, sleeping on piss-stained mattresses. Then I got cut two months into the season, and I realized football was over.

PLAYBOY: So you tried wrestling?

THE ROCK: I called my dad in the middle of the night and asked him to pick me up. I had $7 in my pocket. I moved back into their two-bedroom apartment, and I was lying on the couch when it hit me: Shit, I'm 24 and I'm moving back in with my parents.

PLAYBOY: What did your father think of your new career plan?

THE ROCK: He was adamantly against it. He said to me, "Look around. Look what I have. I have been where you want to go, and this is where it got me. Is this what you want?"

PLAYBOY: You were newly married. Your wife, Dany, had a job and stayed in Miami while you paraded around the country in tights. Women were probably throwing themselves at you in every city. Did she ever get jealous?

THE ROCK: No. I never gave her reason to be. When I was on the road I never saw the city. I flew in, drove to the building, performed, left and got right back onto the highway.

PLAYBOY: So you were a heel in the ring and a baby face in real life.

THE ROCK: I'm saying I was very focused. The only awkward times came when she and I would go to restaurants together; the forwardness of women surprised her.

PLAYBOY: You weren't out there being a hound dog all over the country?

THE ROCK: No, no, no. I would never put myself in that position. My priority was to stay out of trouble, which the guys knew and respected. I'd drink with my buddies, but I mostly sat in my hotel room, ordered pizza and wrote what I was going to do in the ring.

PLAYBOY: Do you have to work hard to look the way you do?

THE ROCK: Absolutely. I get up at 5:30 every morning and train for an hour or more. I love that. I watch my diet, too, though I am a big junk food junkie. I don't fuck around. One day a week I'll eat two large pizzas and two dozen doughnuts. But to do that you have to train religiously so your metabolism is conditioned enough that when you eat that stuff, the carbs, fat and sugar get absorbed. If I kept eating pizza and doughnuts on the second and third days, that would be trouble.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever done steroids?

THE ROCK: Once, in college, for a month and a half. I had no idea what I was taking, which is the idiocy of college kids. I thought I was taking steroids. For all I know it was Tylenol. It didn't help me on the field.

PLAYBOY: Wrestling went through its own steroid-cleanup campaign when some of the stars were impossibly muscular. Were steroids prevalent?

THE ROCK: A lot of guys were doing steroids back then, and some guys still do them. TV audiences aren't blind. They can look at a wrestler's physique and tell the difference. I was lucky to be blessed with genetics, and I never wanted to be the biggest guy out there. Bodybuilding doesn't interest me as much as athletic training does.

PLAYBOY: Could you see yourself getting plastic surgery to stay youthful?

THE ROCK: Well, I couldn't touch my face. It's too pretty, too ruggedly handsome. I don't see it happening, but I might feel different in 20 years, and I'd tell you if I did. I hear a lot of actors popping chops about how women shouldn't get plastic surgery, shouldn't get their boobs done. Shut up. If a woman or a man wants to get a nip or a tuck to be happy, do it. I have.

PLAYBOY: You have? Where?

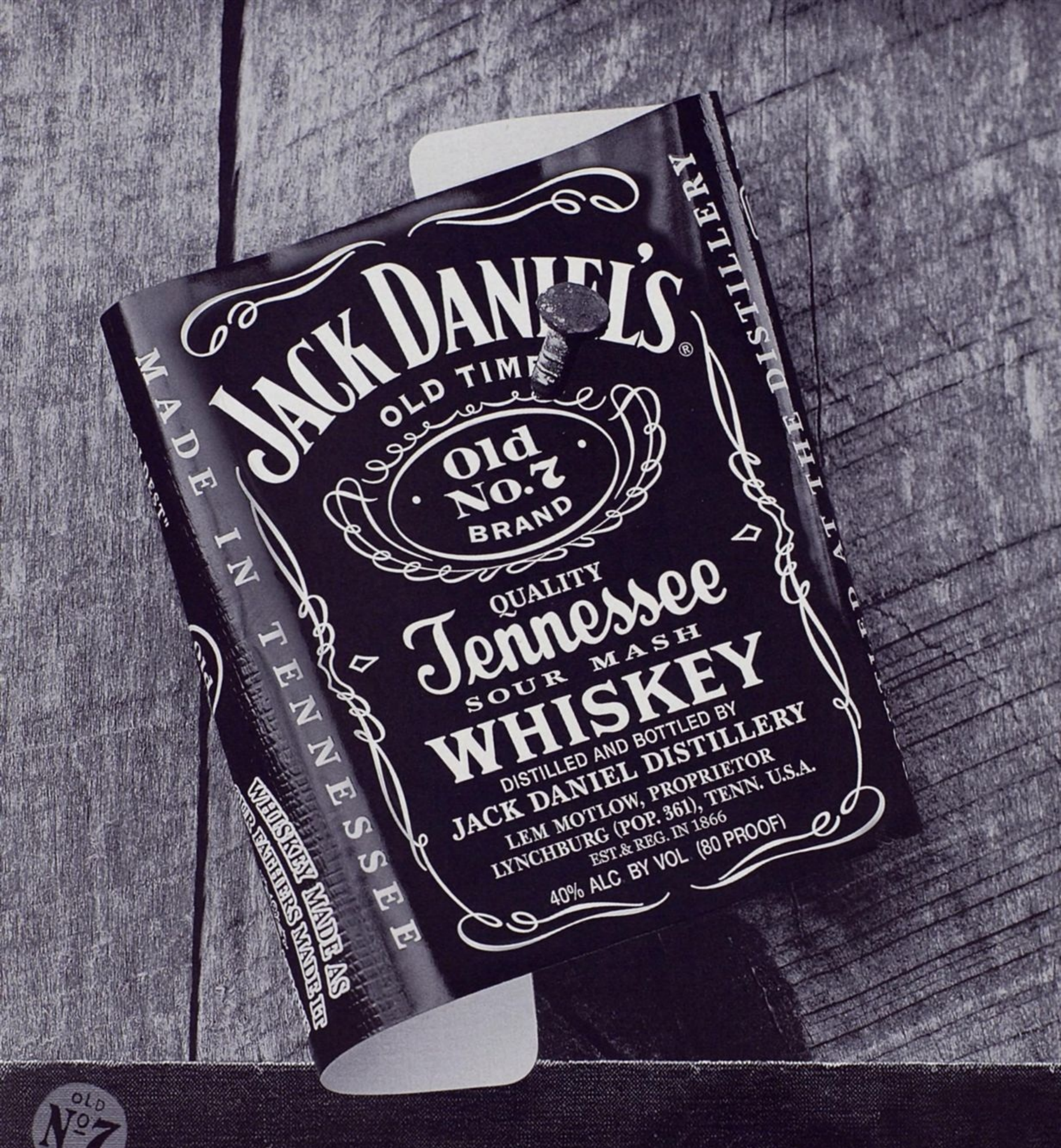
THE ROCK: I did a live show in the ring in 1997, and I went home and watched it later on tape. There's a tight shot of me sauntering in like I'm as cool as the other side of the pillow. I looked closely and said to my wife, "What the fuck is that? I have man titties hanging off the sides of my pecs." I had a quick procedure, and then I could saunter with full confidence.

PLAYBOY: As a fitness symbol, what do you think of the supersizing of America, especially among kids?

THE ROCK: Don't blame McDonald's, Burger King and KFC. Without getting too political, I say the beauty of this country is that, much as you can say anything you want, you can eat anything you want. Here's a novel idea: Put down the Big Mac and have a salad. Get on the treadmill. I am concerned about how available fast food is to kids in school cafeterias. That should be regulated.

PLAYBOY: When you were wrestling's biggest draw in 2000, you appeared at both the Republican and Democratic

(concluded on page 148)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STOLEN SCREAMS

WHEN EDVARD MUNCH'S EXPRESSIONIST MASTERPIECE WAS STOLEN LAST YEAR, IT WASN'T THE FIRST TIME THE WORK HAD GONE MISSING. CAN THE 1994 HEIST, WHICH TRIGGERED AN INTERNATIONAL MANHUNT, HOLD CLUES TO FINDING THE SCREAM AGAIN?

On Sunday, August 22, 2004, Christina Vassiliou stepped inside the doors of a small art museum in Oslo. For Vassiliou, who was traveling with her mother, the vacation to Norway was a reward and a pilgrimage: a reward for her recent graduation from Rutgers University law school in New Jersey, a pilgrimage to see a work of art that fascinated her almost as much as its creator, Norwegian expressionist painter Edvard Munch.

The Munch Museum is situated in a northeastern neighborhood of Oslo, Norway's elegant, quiet capital city. There are narrow cobblestoned streets, trams, immaculate squares and well-tended parks. Every hour or so, delicate chimes ring from towers on the street corners, giving visitors the impression of a city set inside a music box.

The tourist season was waning. The streets were deserted that morning except for a few people walking to cafes. A little after 11 A.M.,

BY SIMON COOPER

Vassiliou, 26, stood in front of the painting she had waited 10 years and traveled 3,700 miles to see: *The Scream,* the iconic depiction of human angst, which has become one of the most recognized images in the world.

The painting, created in 1893, is nearly as enigmatic and mysterious as Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa.* Is the man screaming, or is he shielding his ears from some infernal noise? Whatever the viewer sees, Munch's bold, thick brushstrokes conjure a creation whose power far exceeds the two-and-a-half-foot-by-three-foot frame that contains it. "It is the primal image of urban alienation," says Robert Rosenblum, a curator at New York City's Guggenheim museum. "It looks like an anxiety attack."

Vassiliou, jet-lagged and overwhelmed by the power of the painting she had read about for so many years, found herself deep in thought, lulled by the soft shuffling sounds of the other

gallerygoers, when she heard a man's voice cry out.

"Gun!"

This single word, shouted in English, echoed through the hushed interior of the museum. There were more shouts, this time in Norwegian, and a commotion erupted just out of sight, back in the main foyer.

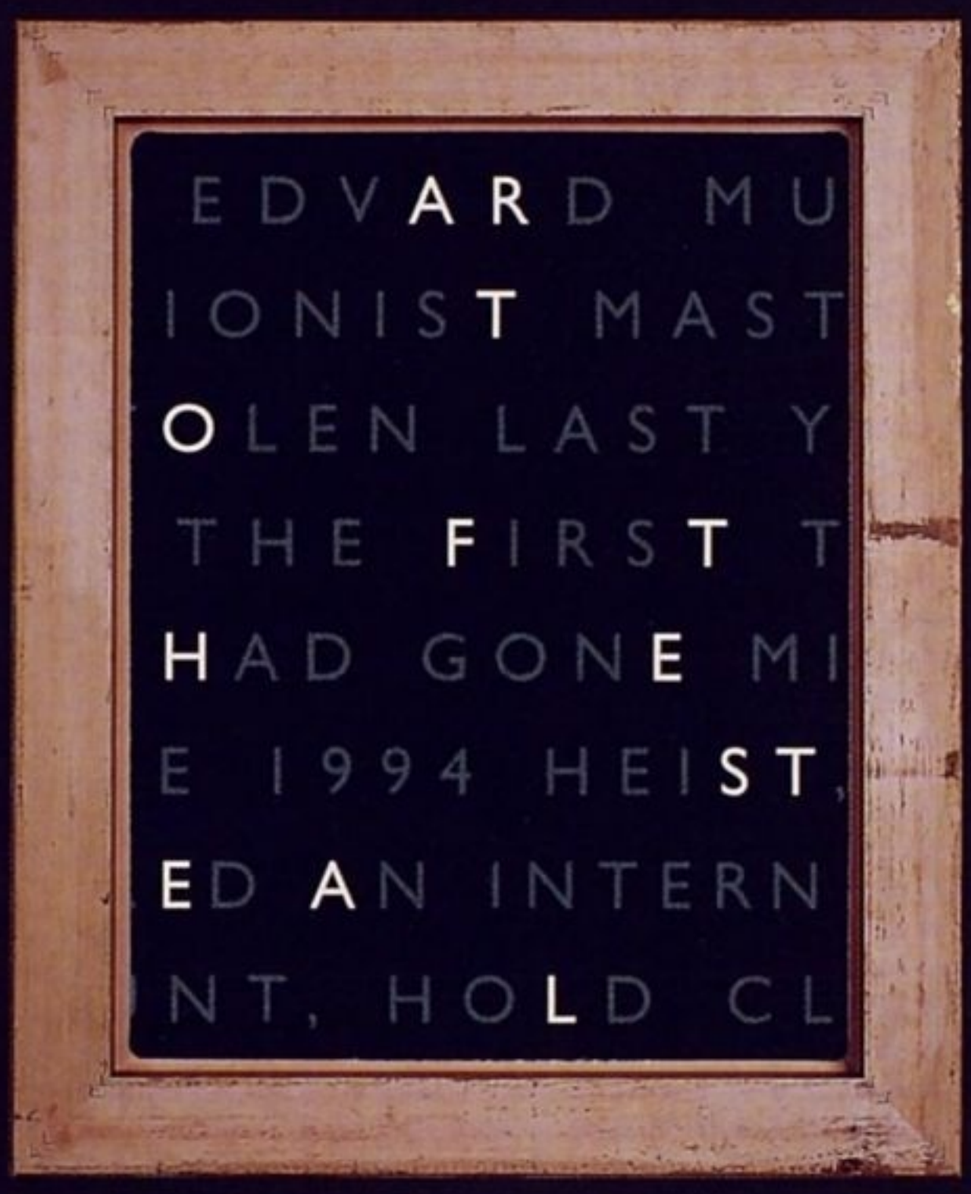
Two men ran past the cafe and the little gift shop and up to the ticket booth. One pulled out a revolver with an enormous, Magnum-size barrel and held it to the head of a female guard. He shouted to the crowd to get down.

Vassiliou turned in the direction of the shouting. She saw the second man, dressed in a gray hooded top and wearing a black face mask and black leather gloves, heading straight toward her. Suddenly he veered away and moved toward an 1893 Munch painting titled *Madonna*. He banged it against the wall until it broke free, severing the gray wires that connected it to an alarm that sounded at the local police station. He took the painting to a viewing area and continued to smash it against a wooden bench, obviously trying to break off its dark, ornate frame.

Then the man stopped and spun in a complete 360. He appeared to be confused, as if he didn't know what to do next. His eyes, the only part of his face visible behind the black mask, searched the walls. Then he saw what he was looking for.

With *Madonna* still in one hand, the man strode past Vassiliou and tore *The Scream* from the wall. The young American woman was frozen to the spot in fear. She stood close enough to touch the robber, who at over six feet tall towered above her. She says she will never forget his blue eyes.

In an instant he was gone: back to the lobby, where he handed one of the paintings to his armed accomplice. They fled the building, dashing about a hundred yards over a lawn—one of them twice dropped a painting—to a waiting black 1992 Audi A6 wagon manned by a third member of the crew. The works were placed in the car, and the Audi peeled away, disappearing into the Norwegian capital's winding side streets.



In no more than two minutes the thieves had helped themselves to two modern masterpieces estimated to have a combined value of more than $100 million.

•

No alarm rang in the museum, and no guards gave chase. Despite a collection containing 1,000 paintings and more than 23,000 drawings and prints worth about $3 billion, the Munch Museum does not arm its guards.

The three men sped away from the museum, briefly hooking to the west on a street called Tøyengata before turning north, following a road that encircles the zoological gardens opposite the Munch Museum.

Inside the getaway car, the thieves were tearing away *Madonna*'s frame and hurling pieces out of the car windows: Fragments were later found lying on the sidewalk, in gutters and under parked cars, like a bread crumb trail marking the robbers' flight.

By the time they passed through a major intersection bisected by tram lines, they were out of the immediate vicinity of the museum. Up hills and through Sunday-quiet roads, they drove deeper into the suburban outskirts of the city, the roads getting smaller, until they pulled behind a block of modern apartments. There, in a muddy spot used to store construction materials, they broke off the final pieces of the frame and tossed them from the car. Turning around, the robbers continued north. Only two or three minutes had passed since they exited the museum.

Honor among thieves? Enger (left) and Ellingsen, two friends who stole *The Scream* in 1994.

They took a road called Hasleveien into a residential area of Oslo, past a Bible school and over a graffiti-emblazoned railway bridge, then made a sharp left into the dirt parking lot of the dreary Sinsen tennis club. Sinsen is one of those drab neighborhoods so familiar to the outskirts of all big cities: utilitarian, frayed at the edges, squeezed between highways and rails, a place you pass through to get somewhere else.

The thieves ditched the Audi in a parking lot and set off a fire extinguisher inside it in an attempt to destroy

ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE BENNY

A tale of two thefts: (bottom left) the ladder left behind by Enger and Ellingsen after the January 1994 theft of *The Scream* from Norway's National Gallery in Oslo; (top left) museum officials show off the recovered painting in May 1994; (above) 10 years later two other thieves head for a getaway car with the second *Scream*; (top) boys in the hoods, caught in the act during the 2004 theft.

any forensic evidence they'd left behind. It was smart thinking not to torch the vehicle, which would have drawn police to Sinsen; the car was not discovered for hours.

At this point police lost the trail. Perhaps another car or cars were parked there and the crooks simply swapped vehicles. Or maybe they exited the parking lot on foot. Only 10 feet of grass and weeds separated them from the railway tracks that run to Bergen and Trondheim. It would have been an easy stroll to the highway opposite and from there into the ether. There were too many possibilities.

•

Back at the museum there was chaos. Three guards were present that day, two women and a man. None seemed to have any idea what to do. Vassiliou remembers being told, "It's okay. They didn't get any paintings," the guard seemingly unaware of the blank spaces on the walls right in front of her.

Meanwhile the crime scene was being overrun. The guards hadn't closed the front doors, and tourists continued to enter, mingling with the witnesses to the heist. Vassiliou estimates it was at least 20 minutes before the first police officer showed up. Many witnesses had already left the museum.

A helicopter scrambled to scan the city for signs of the Audi, but by then the getaway car had been abandoned. The police did not find it until three P.M. Airports, ports and border crossings were put on alert, but this was a futile gesture.

The police stumbled across one bit of luck: some remarkable videotaped footage of the robbers leaving the building. The images came not from the museum's few security cameras but from the cameras of tourists disembarking from a bus in the parking lot.

"No glass in front of the paintings, no alarm systems as in French museums—where a bell rings if visitors have gotten too close—not even a cordon to keep people back a certain distance. There was no search of people's bags at the entrance, and the guards were nowhere to be seen." This assessment, given to a reporter by an indignant French witness named François Castang, was repeated in newspapers throughout Europe and the U.S.

Norway seemed to turn against the museum directors rather than the thieves. ALMOST AS EASY AS ROBBING A KIOSK, read the headline in the daily newspaper *Aftenposten*. Most of the world's media carried the news on the front page or in prime time, adding to Norway's embarrassment.

In Oslo, Munch Museum spokesperson Jorunn Christofferson responded defensively: "We have guards, but when thieves threaten the guards with a gun there is not much to be done."

A palpable sense of shame radiated not just from the museum but from Norway itself. Munch and his most famous painting are deeply embedded in the national psyche. They are examples of world-class achievement in a country of 4.5 million souls striving for a sense of identity among Scandinavian nations. From the upper reaches of the intelligentsia to the criminal underworld, every Norwegian knows Munch and his value to the national pride. The country was ashamed not just because of the ease with which one of Norway's national treasures had been taken but because, as it turns out, this wasn't the first time *The Scream* had been stolen in Oslo. *(continued on page 84)*

"Are you the one
who doesn't believe in the
Easter Bunny?"

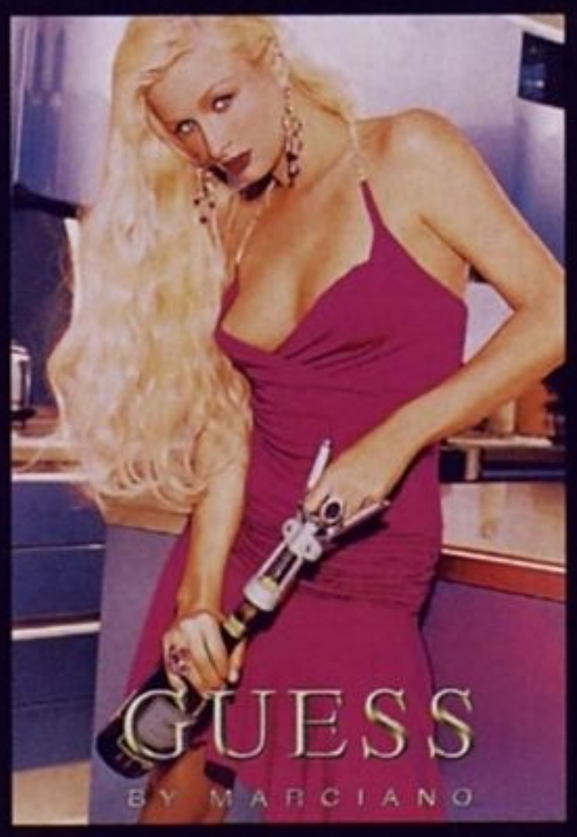
Olivia
2004

playboy's

25

sexiest celebrities

It's star-worshipping season.
Start staring



You may think that stars don't love company, that they instead prefer splendid isolation where nothing glitters that isn't them. Not so. Stars are forever combining into constellations and galaxies where they vie to outdazzle one another. The stars we gather here—young ones such as Jessica and Britney and eternal beauties such as Halle and Pam—are modern models of luminosity, their stellar sexiness having ignited a million billion flashbulbs. That is truest of this year's sexiest star, Paris Hilton, whose magnetic attractiveness can disrupt any man's internal compass. She has triumphed in prime time, web time and fashion ads and on the best-seller list. Are there any unconquered quarters remaining? This year Paris takes on the movies; on the big screen her uptown-underground allure will surely draw even more admirers.

Sex Star of the Year
Paris Hilton

Rebecca Romijn Just because a woman is a vicious blue mutant doesn't mean she's all bad.

Eva Mendes Pictured here under a happy pelt, she can currently be seen tied to Will Smith in *Hitch*.

Salma Hayek After the sunset, before the sunset, at the rising of the moon—anytime, baby!

Denise Richards The ornament who graced our December cover can be caught in *Elvis Has Left the Building*.

Halle Berry First a sublime Catwoman, next Foxy Brown. Clearly this is a woman who loves the classics.

Anna Kournikova She's still hot, and that's no backhanded compliment.

Jenny McCarthy One of the great PMOYs lights up the small screen in *The Bad Girl's Guide*.

Jaime Pressly Her upcoming film is called *Cruel World*. A world without her would be crueler.

Charlize Theron Happily, her *Monster* phase is behind us.

Victoria Silvstedt Will there be no *Boat Trip* in 2005? No *Out Cold*? No *Miss Cast Away*? Is Hollywood mad?

Pam Anderson Novelist, actress, activist. Is there nothing she can't do?

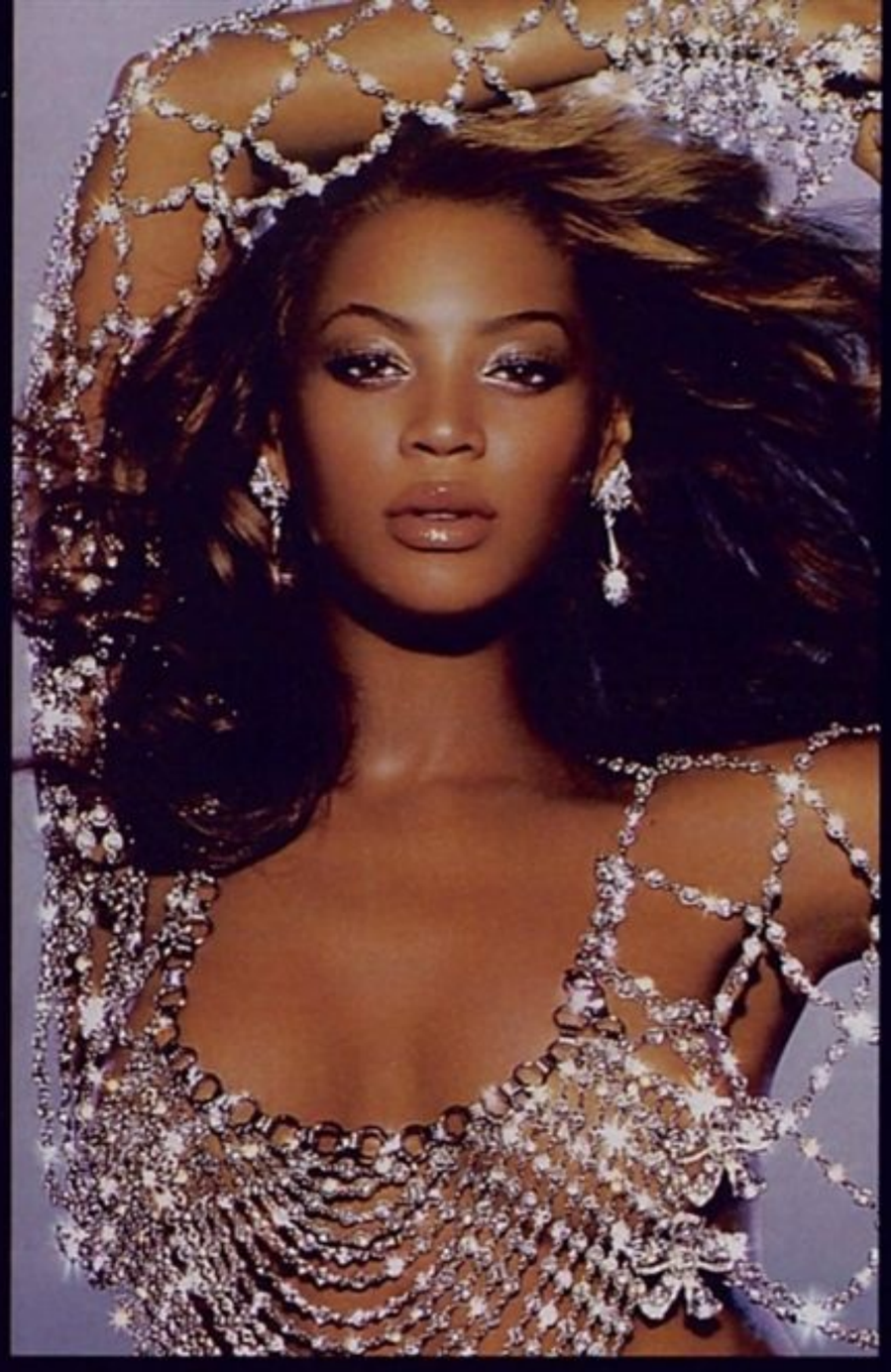
Kirsten Dunst Spidey's love will soon appear as Marie Antoinette. Forget the carbs—for her, we'd eat cake.

Carmella DeCesare She's the choicest part of *Monday Night Raw*.

Carmen Electra Her upcoming film is called *Dirty Love*. The title alone is riveting.

Heidi Klum A fascinating woman, right down to her line of Birkenstocks.

Jessica Simpson The perfect person to fill Daisy Duke's shorts.



Beyoncé Crazy in love? With her, wouldn't you be crazy not to be?

Britney Spears Is she really retiring so she can raise a crop of little Federlines?

Brooke Burke Isn't it a tad ironic that this beauty hosts a series called *Rank*?

Cameron Diaz Yo, Princess Fiona—we have our ogreish side too!

Anna Nicole Smith She's larger than life and more real than reality.

Jennifer Lopez Jenny from the block recently opened the world's first J. Lo store—in Russia.

Kate Beckinsale She's one of the few vampiresses we'd welcome near our jugular.

Jenna Jameson Most famous for her nonfiction best-sell—What? She does more than write?

SCREAMS (continued from page 74)

It took 50 seconds to pull off the greatest art theft since 1911, when the Mona Lisa was taken from the Louvre.

SEPTEMBER 2004: DICK ELLIS

It is late September 2004, and in London's Gray's Inn—a large quadrangle inhabited by members of the British legal profession since the 1500s—fall leaves are being blown in tight eddies around a courtyard. *The Scream* and *Madonna* have been missing for a month. In a discreet third-floor office in a discreet redbrick building, Dick Ellis is poring over the details of the robbery. Like most stolen-art experts (he is a former member of a British police art-crimes squad), he fears it will be years before the paintings resurface.

Ellis, a former competitive rower, has settled into a comfortable middle age. In a dark blue suit, cream shirt and red tie, he gives off the confident, authoritative air of a career policeman, which he is. The son of a surgeon and a physiotherapist, brother to a doctor and a psychiatric nurse, Ellis figured out early on that he would not follow the family tradition. "I knew I didn't deal terribly well with people who are ill," he says. At the age of 19 he joined London's Metropolitan Police.

Early in his career a burglar broke into his parents' house and made off with the family silver. It was a clean, professional job; the crook drilled a small hole in a window at the back of the house before inserting a wire tool that lifted the catch. Ellis took it upon himself to investigate and two days later tracked the family's silver sugar bowl to a stall at a local market. His detective work resulted in the return not only of his parents' collection but also of silver belonging to their neighbors, all targeted by the same thief. Ellis went on to co-found Scotland Yard's Art and Antiques Squad in 1990 as a detective sergeant. Now retired from the Metropolitan Police, he runs his own consultancy, International Art Recovery, tracking stolen art and antiques for private clients and institutions.

"The stolen-art market works like any other market," he says. "Criminals are just businessmen who have made a career choice to earn their money illegally, and art is like any other commodity in which they deal, such as drugs or firearms. But when it comes to something as distinctive as *The Scream,* you're talking about an extremely difficult market. Yes, these paintings are incredibly valuable, but they are also so well-known they are unsellable."

Then what possibly could have motivated these three men to commit an audacious daylight theft of paintings that have little or no street value?

"It wasn't for the insurance," says Ellis matter-of-factly. "As any art thief worth his salt knows, such paintings are rarely insured, due to the prohibitive cost of the premiums." For ransom, then? Again unlikely, says Ellis: "The museum has no real money of its own, and the Norwegian government has clearly stated that it will not, under any circumstances, pay ransoms."

Criminals usually assign a stolen painting a value of about 10 percent of its highest publicly reported worth. The painting can then be used in negotiations for drugs, arms or other black-market items such as jewelry or silver. In 1990 a painting by Dutch master Gabriel Metsu was recovered in Istanbul, where it had been part of a heroin deal. And Vermeer's 1670 work *Lady Writing a Letter With Her Maid* was recovered from an Antwerp gem dealer, who had taken it as collateral against a loan he'd made to the thieves. "Paintings circulate like bonds," Ellis says, "like any other international commodity."

But Ellis ventures that something else may have been at work here. In the case of *The Scream,* he thinks the thieves may have decided to steal something "so significant nationally that it would be a big snub to the authorities. It would really catch the headlines and make a statement—a way of showing the police and their colleagues that these men are the number one criminals in Norway."

Bragging rights for the thieves—could that have been the motivation? That deduction, the educated guess of a savvy art cop, turned out to be the key to solving the case of the missing 1994 *Scream.* Dick Ellis should know—he headed up the international investigation that recovered it.

Edvard Munch painted the harrowing figure in *The Scream* multiple times: in oil, in tempera and in a mixture of the two on cardboard. He created lithographs as well, and the originals of these are worth millions, though not nearly as much as the paintings. In the early hours of February 12, 1994, two young criminals raided the National Gallery in Oslo and stole its copy of *The Scream,* which is called the first version of the painting and considered the most valuable of the four known versions. The 2004 thieves stole the painting known as the second *Scream,* for the order in which it was painted. (It is also called, unkindly, the seasick *Scream,* for its livid green palette.) Version three is still held safely in the Munch Museum, and the fourth is in the hands of a private collector. Though less well-known, the thieves' other 2004 trophy, *Madonna*—a dark, erotic portrait of a woman—is considered another example of the artist's genius.

After examining the circumstances of the two robberies, Ellis has begun to believe that faint undercurrents may connect the heists. It's not a simple story. A full decade divides the two crimes, which involve three stolen masterpieces, half a dozen crooks, squadrons of police, art experts from three countries, $472,000 in cash and a murder. But tangled in the strands of the tale that follows may be tantalizing clues to solve the 2004 theft, as well as the reasons professional thieves have gone to such trouble to steal Norway's most famous painting—twice.

BAD BOYS: ELLINGSEN AND ENGER

"Thanks for the bad security."

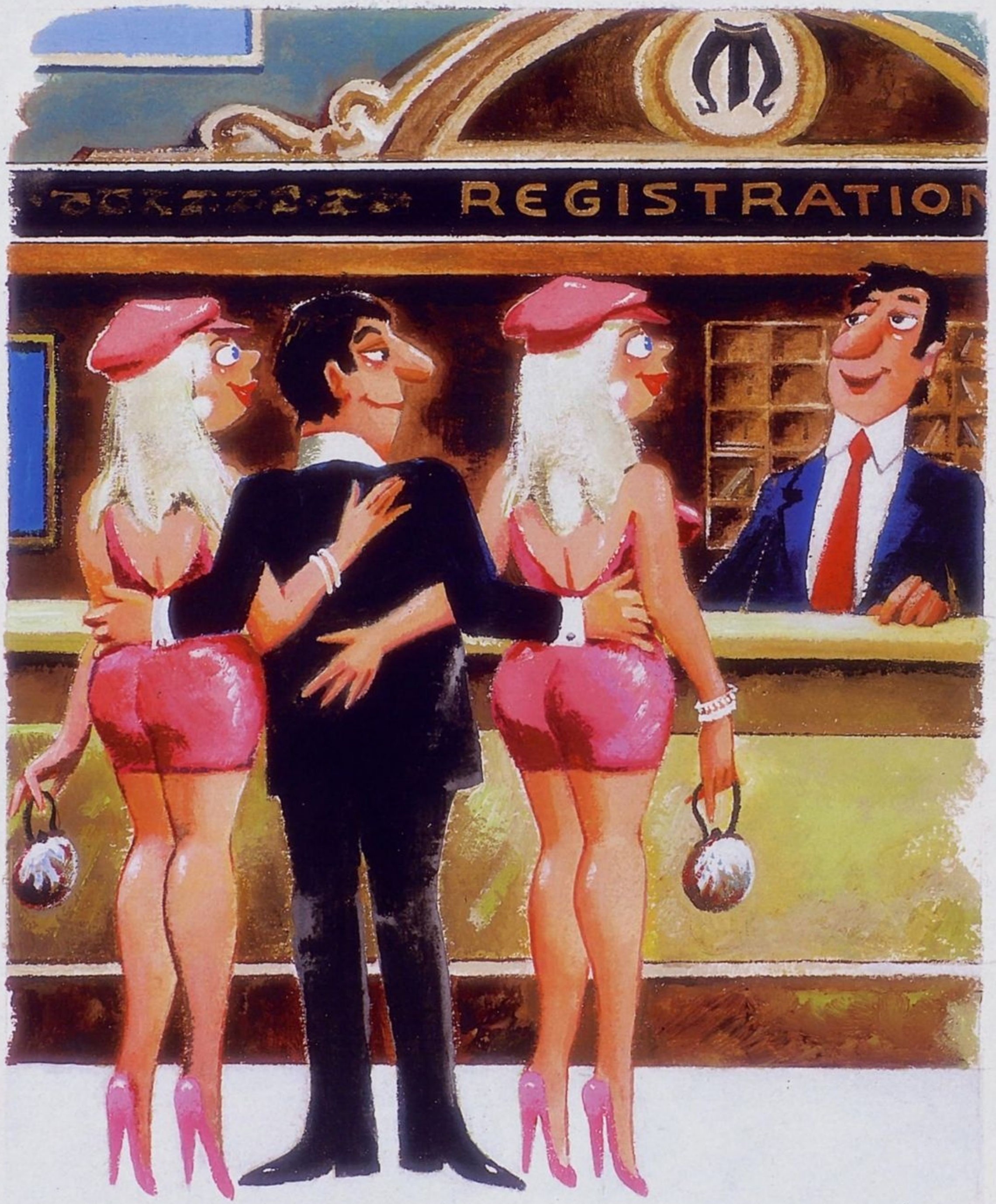
These five words were handwritten on a postcard and pinned to the space on the wall where, a few minutes earlier, *The Scream* had hung. It was the early hours of February 12, 1994; a curtain twisted in the winter wind blowing through the window where the thieves had entered. A ladder led down to the street right outside the front door of the National Gallery in Oslo.

Grainy security camera footage would later document the crime for police and embarrassed gallery officials. At 6:30 A.M. two masked men came around the side of the museum. They propped their ladder against the museum's front wall; while one held it steady, the other began to ascend the rungs. He didn't make it to the top. Maybe it was the cold, maybe the rungs were slippery with ice, or maybe he was just so nervous that his shaking legs couldn't hold him, but 18-year-old William Ellingsen slipped and nearly fell on top of Pål Enger, his partner in crime.

Ellingsen quickly recovered and went back up, reaching the window. The teenager broke the window, went inside and simply pulled *The Scream* off the wall.

It was all over in 50 seconds. Fifty seconds to pull off the greatest and easiest art theft since 1911, when former Louvre employee Vincenzo Peruggia made off with the *Mona Lisa* tucked under his smock. That theft wasn't noticed for an entire day, but the masterpiece was finally recovered two years later from a trunk in a Florence, Italy hotel room. The ensuing publicity ensured that the *Mona Lisa*

(continued on page 152)



"I assume you'll be wanting a double?"

PUNCHDRUNK

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, VIOLENCE IS THE ONLY WAY TO GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

Webber looks around, his face pushed out of shape, one cheekbone lower than the other. One of his eyes is just a milk-white ball pinched in the red-black swelling under his brow. His lips, Webber's lips, are split so deep in the middle he's got four lips instead of two. Inside all those lips, you can't see a single tooth left.

Webber looks around the jet's cabin, the white leather on the walls, the bird's-eye maple varnished to a mirror shine. Webber looks at the drink in his hand, the ice hardly melted in the blast of the air-conditioning. He says, too loud on account of his hearing loss, he almost shouts, "Where we at?"

They're in a Gulfstream G550, the nicest private jet you can charter, Flint says. Then Flint digs two fingers into a pants pocket and hands something across the aisle to Webber. A little white pill. "Swallow this," Flint says. "And drink your drink. We're almost there."

FICTION BY CHUCK PALAHNIUK

ILLUSTRATION BY GEOFFREY GRAHN

FOR A FUND-RAISER, OUR FIRST IDEA WAS FIVE BUCKS TO PUNCH A MIME.

"Almost where?" Webber says, and he drinks the pill down.

He's still twisted around enough to see the white leather club chairs that recline and swivel. The white carpet. The bird's-eye maple tables, polished to the point they look wet. The white suede couches that line the cabin. The matching throw cushions. The magazines, each one as big as a movie poster, called *Elite Traveler,* with a cover price of $35. The 24-karat-gold-plated cup holders and the faucets in the bathroom. The galley with its espresso machine and halogen light bouncing bright off the lead-crystal glassware. The microwave and fridge and ice machine. All this, flying along at 51,000 feet, Mach zero-point-eight-eight, somewhere above the Mediterranean. All of them drinking scotch. All of this nicer than anything you'll ever be inside, anything short of a casket.

Webber tilts his drink back, sticks his big red potato nose into the cold air, and you can see up inside each nostril, see how they don't really go anywhere, not anymore. But Webber says, "What's that smell?"

And Flint sniffs and says, "Does ammonium nitrate ring a bell?"

It's the ammonium nitrate their buddy Jenson had ready for them in Florida. Their buddy from the Gulf war. Our Reverend Godless.

"You mean like fertilizer?" Webber says. And Flint says, "Half a ton."

Webber's hand, it's shaking so hard you can hear the ice rattle in his empty glass. That shaking, it's just traumatic Parkinson's is all. Traumatic encephalopathy will do that to you, where partial necrosis of brain tissue takes place. Neurons replaced by brain-dead scar tissue. You put on a curly red wig and false eyelashes, lip-synch to Bette Midler at the Collaris County Fair and Rodeo and offer people the chance to punch your face at 10 bucks a shot, and you can make some real money.

Other places, you'll need to wear a curly blonde wig, squeeze your ass into a tight sequined dress, your feet in the biggest pair of high heels you can find. Lip-synch to Barbra Streisand singing that "Evergreen" song and you'd better have a friend waiting to drive you to the emergency room. Take a couple of Vicodins beforehand, before you glue on those long pink Barbra Streisand fingernails; after them you can't pick up anything smaller than a beer bottle. Take your painkillers first and you can sing both sides of *Color Me Barbra* before a really good shot puts you down.

For a fund-raiser, our first idea was Five Bucks to Punch a Mime. And it worked, mostly in college towns, the aggie schools. Some towns, nobody went home without some of that clown white smeared across their knuckles. Clown white and blood.

Problem is, the novelty wears off. Renting a Gulfstream costs bucks. Just buying the gas and oil to fly from here to Europe costs about 30 grand. One-way it's not so bad, but you never want to go into a charter place saying you plan to fly the plane only one-way.... Talk about your red flags.

No, Webber would put on that black leotard and folks would already be salivating to hit him. He'd paint his face white, step into his invisible box, start miming away, and the cash would just flow in. Colleges mostly, but we did good business at county and state fairs, too. Even if folks took it as some kind of minstrel show, they'd still pay to knock him down, to make him bleed.

For roadhouse bars, after the mime routine petered out, we tried 50 Bucks to Punch a Chick. Flint had this girl who was up for it. But after, like, one shot to the face, she was saying, "No way...." On the floor, sitting in the peanut shells on the floor and holding her nose, this girl says, "Let me go to flight school. Let me play the pilot instead. I still want to help."

We still had must've been half the bar standing in line with their money. Divorced dads, dumped boyfriends, guys with old potty-training issues, all of them wanting to take their best shot.

Flint says, "I can fix this." And he helps his girl to her feet. Taking her by the elbow, he leads her into the ladies' room. Going in with her, Flint holds up his hand, fingers spread, and he says, "Give me five minutes."

Just out of the Army like that, we didn't figure how else to make that kind of money, not legal-wise. The way Flint saw it, there's no law yet that says folks can't pay to sock you.

It's then that Flint comes out of the ladies' room wearing the girl's Saturday-night wig, all her makeup used up on his big, clean-shaven face. He's unbuttoned his shirt and tied the shirttails together over his gut with paper towels stuffed in to make boobs. With whole tubes of lipstick smeared around his mouth, Flint, he says, "Let's do this thing...."

Folks standing in line, they're saying 50 bucks to punch some guy is a cheat. So Flint, he says, "Make it 10 bucks...." Folks still hang back, look around for some better way to waste their cash.

It's then that Webber goes over to the jukebox, drops in a quarter, presses a few buttons and—magic. The music starts, and for the length of one exhale all you can hear is every man in the bar letting out a long groan. The song, it's the wailing song from the end of that *Titanic* movie. That Canadian chick.

And Flint, with his blonde wig and big clown mouth, he steps up onto a chair, then up onto a table, and he starts singing along. With the whole bar watching, Flint gives it everything he's got, sliding his hands up and down the sides of his blue jeans. His eyes closed, all you can see there is his shimmering blue eye shadow. That red smear, singing.

Right on time, Webber reaches up to offer Flint a hand down. Flint takes it, ladylike, still lip-synching. You can see now his fingernails painted candy red. And Webber whispers to him, "I plugged in five bucks' worth of quarters." Webber helps Flint down to face the first man in line, and Webber says, "This song's the only thing they're going to hear all night."

From Webber's five bucks they made almost $600 that night. Not a fist left that bar not beat deep, tattooed blue and red and eyeliner green with the makeup from Flint's face. Some guys, they'd hit him until that hand got tired and then get back in line to use their other. *(continued on page 143)*

"Does anyone else have to go potty?!"

THE YEAR IN

20 05

MUSIC

Once again, music stands at a turning point. As has been the case since the advents of the player piano and the jukebox, technology drives the art in a different direction. Today iTunes, Pro Tools, P2P and ring tones provide the impetus for a new form of music. The song has supplanted the album as the format of our era. Considering that albums are mostly little more than overpriced expressions of self-important excess, that isn't a bad thing. With the exception of the period between *Sgt. Pepper's* in 1967 and *In Utero* in 1993, American popular music has been dominated by the song. Now that the historical aberration of the LP has ended, we can return to that remarkable tradition. We can listen to Avril's "My Happy Ending" and not bother with her album. And songs are made by producers, not artists. Much as they did during the reigns of Sam Phillips and Phil Spector, producers have taken artistic control from musicians. This may or may not turn out to be a good development. But nearly everyone will agree that we're ready for a change.

SWEET MUSIC

ASHANTI

Her latest CD is called *Concrete Rose* for good reason: Ashanti is tough enough to hang with the bad boys of the Inc. Records (formerly Murder Inc.), but her crooning is so sweet it makes your teeth hurt. Four years after she sang the hook on Ja Rule's "Always on Time," we still have that damn song—and her body—stuck in our mind.

SWEET MUSIC

LINDSAY LOHAN

She's the girl we knew would be a woman soon—but we still weren't quite prepared for the salacious jiggle-bell-rock routine in *Mean Girls*. Vocal skills aside, Lohan does have one notable song in her stash: "Ultimate," a frothy ode to a male friend who is about to get some benefits. Big ones.

FELIX DA HOUSECAT'S

TOP FIVE

FUNKY-SEXY ALBUMS

1. ***LET'S STAY TOGETHER***
—AL GREEN
2. ***SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER***
—THE BEE GEES
3. ***SIGN 'O' THE TIMES***
—PRINCE
4. ***VOODOO***
—D'ANGELO
5. ***KITTENZ AND THEE GLITZ***
—FELIX DA HOUSECAT

OF MARQUEES AND MUSIC

IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, ART IS EASILY LOST AMID THE STARDOM

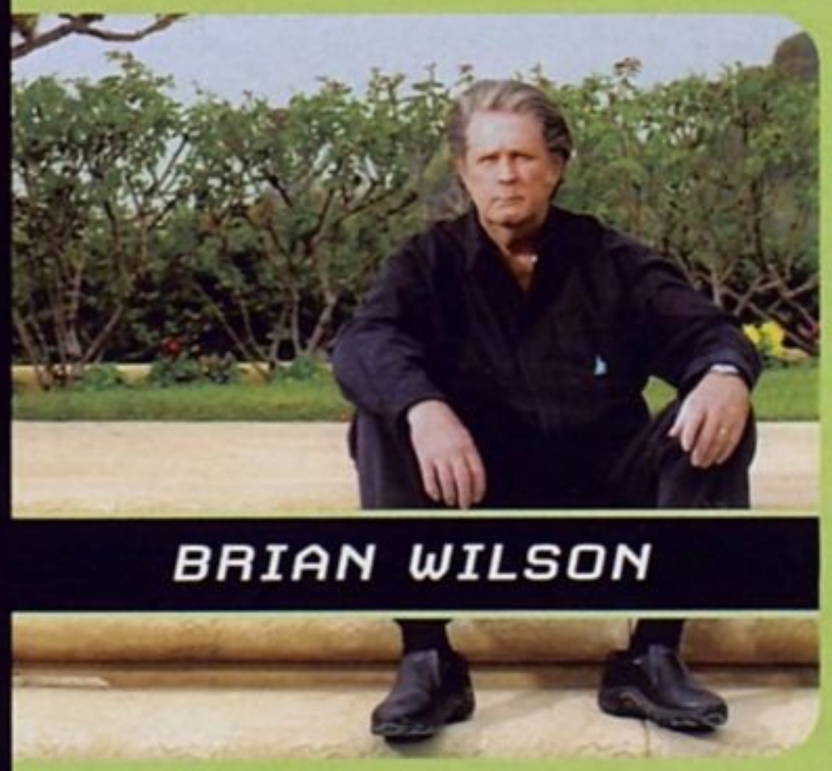
IT'S SEPTEMBER IN LOS ANGELES. Johnny Ramone, 55, is dying of cancer at home. The Chucks are back in their box; the black leather has been hung up; that old Mosrite ax is behind Plexiglas. For some reason Rob Zombie is there. And Eddie Vedder, John Frusciante, Lisa Marie Presley, Vincent Gallo and an assortment of young Coppolas (including Rooney singer Robert Carmine). They've gathered to pay their last respects or some facsimile thereof. Even Talia Shire is there. "Only in L.A.," someone says, either during or after the fact. It's the media. Because they're there too, naturally.

In L.A. this is what passes as a music scene. Freaks, dinosaurs, film brats and paparazzi lined up next to a fading New York idol. Is this honest? What would Joey do? And what do any of these people have in common? For years hipsters have struggled to figure this out. But finding the connection between the Sunset Strip and the legitimacy of Silver Lake Boulevard has proved to be more difficult than getting directions from Courtney Love.

It seems the only force capable of transcending musical boundaries in Los Angeles (age, locale, genre) is Hollywood celebrity and that familiar local habit of chasing something you don't have or desperately grasping at the one thing you once had that made everyone pay attention to you. Examples of the latter are constant, if short-lived: Rob Zombie's foray into horror films, Guns N' Roses' long-delayed "new" album, star-crossed superbands such as Audioslave and Velvet Revolver. Members of this class are not hard to come by. Pretty much any Red Hot Chili Pepper qualifies.

The other group retains its novelty. For now. Take Autolux, an archetypal Los Feliz band if ever there was one: artsy, pretentious, aloof. Just the type of group that should be too good for Hollywood. Except that drummer Carla Azar dates actor Giovanni Ribisi, singer Eugene Goreshter holds hands with Shannyn Sossamon, and the ubiquitous Vincent Gallo goes to its shows. On the major side of town are the Coppola-connected bands Rooney and Phantom Planet. (Robert Carmine's name was changed from Robert Coppola Schwartzman; his brother Jason Schwartzman left PP last year.) Each band owes much of its success to playing on *The O.C.* and to the siblings' acting careers.

It's not that Hollywood's influence on young Angeleno musicians is all that bad. It's that it's weird and incestuous. Over time it robs Angelenos of the ability to judge their artists and robs artists of their good judgment. (Juliette Lewis now fronts her own punk band, which includes a former member of Hole and a guy who worked with Aerosmith—the first band to bridge the film brat–dinosaur gap.) While our aging symbols reach for remnants of bygone lives, the fresh-faced rush to secure future spotlights. It doesn't matter whether Zombie and Gallo are buds. Such a grouping looks as if it were made to be viewed. But what else should we expect from L.A.? Where one's artistic output is overshadowed by one's ability to be seen, there's no room for the authenticity the Ramones embodied. RIP, Johnny. —CHRIS MARTINS



BRIAN WILSON

PLAYBOY: Before *Smile* came out last fall it was referred to as the greatest album never released. How do you think it would have sold had you released it in 1967?

WILSON: It would have influenced people in the business to want to make better music, but it wouldn't have sold at all. It would have been too ahead of its time.

PLAYBOY: Is it true you once took a crap on your father's dinner plate?

WILSON: My brothers and I cooked it up. Dennis said, "Why don't you shit on a plate and put it on Dad's table?" So I did. My dad came out going, "What the hell is this?" Then—*boom! boom!*—he beat me up. It was worth it. That was the funniest joke I ever played on anybody.

PLAYBOY: What's something we don't know about your days as a Beach Boy?

WILSON: I don't like the beach. And I will never, ever try surfing. I'm too afraid I'll get hit in the head with the surfboard.

SWEET MUSIC

CHRISTINA AGUILERA

Unlike a lot of today's would-be pop music idols, Aguilera dispenses with any sort of coyness about sex. Thank God, because we're tired of hypocritical bubble-breasted brats hawking themselves to horny suburban kids by beating around the bush. To those about to be stripped, we salute you.

TOM MORELLO'S

TOP FIVE

ALBUMS OF ALL TIME

1. ***LONDON CALLING*** —THE CLASH
2. ***IV*** —LED ZEPPELIN
3. ***DARKNESS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN*** —BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
4. ***IT TAKES A NATION OF MILLIONS TO HOLD US BACK*** —PUBLIC ENEMY
5. ***THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'*** —BOB DYLAN

SLICK RICK

PLAYBOY: How has hip-hop changed since the days of Doug E. Fresh?

RICK: It has become more commercial, a lot more mainstream. It's big business now, and other races have embraced it. In the past, major companies would never have thought of using hip-hop jingles to sell their products.

PLAYBOY: What kind of music do you listen to at home?

RICK: I like stuff from the 1960s and early 1970s, and old-school reggae. A lot of music from the 1960s and 1970s has more originality and soul. That was before music became more of a business. I guess that was a magical era. That's why James Brown will always be the king of soul for me. Nobody has matched that level of strength musically, as far as I'm concerned. Soul is everlasting.

PLAYBOY: What new music do you listen to?

RICK: Missy Elliott definitely carries a house hip-hop type of flavor that has strength. But with today's hip-hop, it's hard to find a track you can enjoy dancing to. A lot of people have skills, but you hear few songs in heavy rotation that you are drawn to.

PLAYBOY: Who would you say are the most underrated hip-hoppers working today?

RICK: Certain members of the Wu-Tang Clan are underrated, like RZA, Raekwon and Ghostface.

PLAYBOY: The South is hot in hip-hop today. Its music is simpler than the music you make.

RICK: I'm not really familiar with any of that. I'm a New York City person. Unless it has a cute story or something, I'm really not interested. The bounce era isn't for me. I'm of a different era. It's cute for the kids, for the young generation, you know?

SCOTT WEILAND

PLAYBOY: You're such a tremendous rock frontman. Who are some of your favorite frontmen in rock history?

WEILAND: There are five guys who, if I threw them into a cup I would call that cup the holy grail of rock and roll. They're James Brown, David Bowie, Jim Morrison, Iggy Pop and Mick Jagger.

PLAYBOY: Have you met all five?

WEILAND: The only one I haven't met is Bowie. He's probably my greatest icon, not just as a frontman but as a musical artist. He's grown older so gracefully, and he continues to raise the bar. He's a style icon. I've always respected the way he takes fashion to the level of an art form. That's something I try to do. Rock-and-roll clothes are fun, but that's just one aspect of my appreciation of clothing and fashion. My meeting with Jim Morrison was on a psychic level while I was high on opium.

PLAYBOY: In the "Fall to Pieces" video you re-create some of the lowest moments from when you were hooked on drugs. Was it hard to go back there?

WEILAND: Yeah, it was. To do it convincingly I had to reach down inside and pull those feelings back up. I had to go to that lonely, bleak, blank, empty, dark place. It was like being in a pit that you cannot crawl out of. The video could have turned out cheesy, but I think we pulled it off.

PLAYBOY: Why do you and your bandmates have so much onstage chemistry?

WEILAND: Because we've all lived our lives to the hilt. We have each other's back. When you have five ex-junkies in a gang, anything can happen at any time to any one of us. There's tension, energy, angst and sensuality between us. There's danger in the music. That's why people are so attracted to it. There isn't a lot of realness and truth in rock music today. So much of it is canned and controlled.

PLAYBOY: You have two kids. Do they know their father is a rock star?

WEILAND: They do, and they're totally into it. My son, Noah, is four, and he thinks he's in the band. When he comes to our shows we hook him up with a mike, a mike stand and a monitor on the side of the stage. He sings along and dances to the entire show. He even has some of my moves down.

DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS

PLAYBOY: You've been divorced twice. What's the first album you reach for when things start going south?

PATTERSON HOOD: Shit, I lost about 1,500 records the last time that happened, so I take any of them I can reach. I was on the road when the records were divvied up. I came home to a couple of boxes with my name taped on them. I'm committed to never going there again. If I had to pick an album to get me through a divorce, it would probably be *Sister Lovers* by Big Star. I tend to turn to Big Star during heartbreak times.

PLAYBOY: What else are you listening to these days?

HOOD: I've been listening to the Faces' boxed set obsessively. It's my favorite. I obviously missed the Faces days, so for me this is like finding the Rolling Stones' *Sticky Fingers* for the first time. I'm also still listening to Loretta Lynn's *Van Lear Rose* and Tom Waits's *Real Gone*. Waits just keeps getting better. I also love Kanye West's record, *The College Dropout*.

PLAYBOY: On the road, what music starts arguments in the van?

HOOD: I have a Todd Rundgren fixation, but I'm not allowed to play his stuff in the van. That applies at home, too. My wife and I have comparable taste in music, but Rundgren is my weird thing that no one I spend time with enjoys. It's not worth playing anything in the van that everyone doesn't like, so we tend to listen to a lot of hip-hop and a lot of Johnny Cash. And soul music. Bobby Womack is big with us. Shana has an Otis Redding mix that we all love. We're all Hall and Oates fans for some reason. That seems to surprise everyone.

PLAYBOY: For a Southern rock band, you guys listen to a lot of hip-hop.

HOOD: True. About a year ago I was listening to a lot of OutKast and Lil Jon. I've liked hip-hop since I was in high school. I used to be a big Grandmaster Flash fan.

PLAYBOY: Why did Southern hip-hop take so long to break out?

HOOD: Music always comes from the South. This was one time it was backward. The give-and-take in hip-hop makes for some of the best stuff. New York hip-hop is hard-edged. Southern hip-hop seems closer to Los Angeles hip-hop. The hot, wet Southern climate makes the grooves lazier or something. Lyrically, it's really its own thing. And no one is better than OutKast. OutKast is the Prince of this era.

PLAYBOY: You've been playing music with guitarist Mike Cooley for almost 20 years. What's the dumbest fight you two have ever had?

HOOD: We once got into a fight and didn't speak to each other for more than a year, but I don't seem to know what it was about. We have weird ways of communicating. We're just now figuring it out. We were always on the verge of breaking up. It took a break for us to figure out we're better off working it out. That time we probably got into a fight about Todd Rundgren or something. Who knows?

PLAYBOY: Lynyrd Skynyrd or the Allman Brothers?

HOOD: Definitely Skynyrd. I'm all about songwriting, and Ronnie Van Zant was an incredible songwriter. The Allman Brothers were better players, but I've never been into the jam band thing. They have an amazing lineup now, though. It's the best it's been since the Duane Allman days. Gregg doesn't seem like he's shooting up or anything.

MUSICIANS WITH ADVANCED DEGREES

TOMMY LEE

SCHOLAR

SEX, DRUGS AND PARTICLE PHYSICS? BEFORE THEY TOPPED THE CHARTS, THESE MUSICIANS HIT THE BOOKS

DEXTER HOLLAND, THE OFFSPRING
PH.D. CANDIDATE IN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY, USC

MIRA AROYO, LADYTRON
PH.D. IN GENETICS, OXFORD UNIVERSITY

ART GARFUNKEL
MASTER'S IN MATHEMATICS, COLUMBIA

GREG GRAFFIN, BAD RELIGION
PH.D. IN PALEOANTHROPOLOGY, CORNELL

MILO AUKERMAN, DESCENDENTS
PH.D. IN BIOCHEMISTRY, UC SAN DIEGO

TOM SCHOLZ, BOSTON
MASTER'S IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, MIT

STERLING MORRISON, VELVET UNDERGROUND
PH.D. IN MEDIEVAL LITERATURE, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

KRIS KRISTOFFERSON
MASTER'S IN ENGLISH LITERATURE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY

RUBÉN BLADES
MASTER'S IN INTERNATIONAL LAW, HARVARD

SAM BEAM, IRON AND WINE
MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN MOTION PICTURE AND TV, FLORIDA STATE

JOE PERNICE, THE PERNICE BROTHERS
MASTER'S IN CREATIVE WRITING, UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

TOMMY LEE
PH.D. IN CARNAL ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

SLASH'S TOP FIVE

SONGS FOR SEX

1. **"LET'S GET IT ON"** —MARVIN GAYE
2. **"LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY"** —DONNA SUMMER
3. **"HEAD LIKE A HOLE"** —NINE INCH NAILS
4. **"NO QUARTER"** —LED ZEPPELIN
5. **"CALIFORNIA LOVE"** —2 PAC FEATURING DR. DRE AND ROGER TROUTMAN

SWEET MUSIC

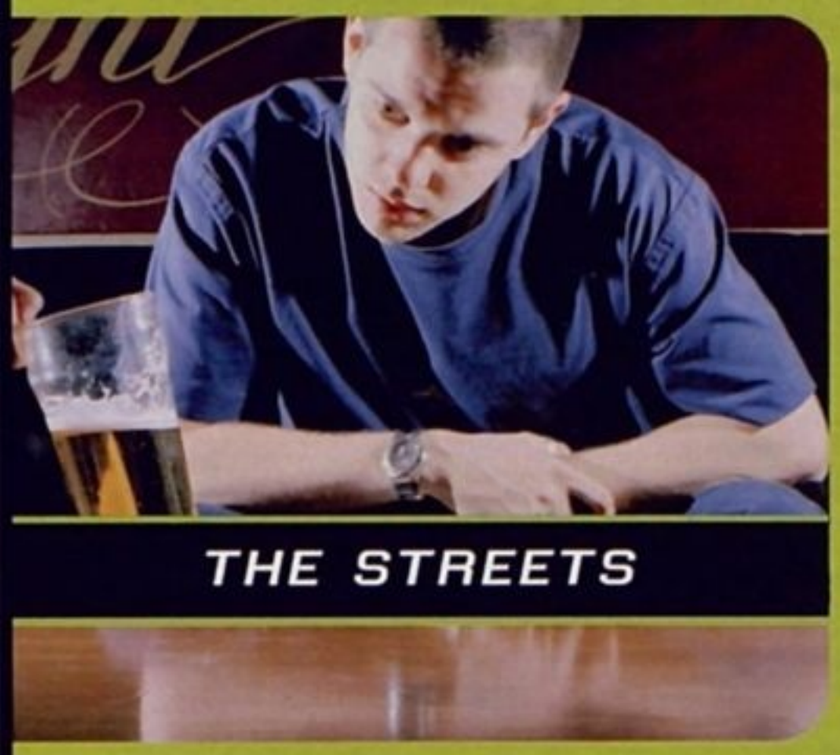
ASHLEE SIMPSON

We almost forgive her for her MTV reality show, for her Milli Vanilli routine on *SNL* and for appearing on *7th Heaven*—because, after all, when we were 19 we were playing *Tetris* in our parents' basement and bribing the neighbor to buy us beer.

sweet music

GWEN STEFANI

She's not just a girl anymore. Contrary to what she sang in No Doubt's 1996 hit, Stefani has grown into a star. She's a fashion designer. A Scorsese actor. And she even made disco cool again with her solo CD, *Love, Angel, Music, Baby.* We have one question: When it comes to PLAYBOY, what you waiting for?



THE STREETS

PLAYBOY: You recorded your first album at your parents' house. What was the hardest part about recording in the kitchen?

MIKE SKINNER: The hardest thing was having to go to work as well. When you don't have enough money to do music full-time, you need to have a normal job, too. Having two full-time jobs drives you into the ground. I was actually working in the lingerie section of a department store at the time.

PLAYBOY: Why would you leave that job?

SKINNER: Exactly. It was an emotional day.

PLAYBOY: What are you listening to now?

SKINNER: The Dizzee Rascal album is one of my favorites of 2004. I also really like the latest from Snoop. But I don't commit much time to listening to a whole album.

PLAYBOY: Which do you prefer, beer or brandy?

SKINNER: They should be used in combination. Drink a lot of brandy and it really starts fucking with you. Beer is good if you want to add a silly edge to the night, but beer puts you on your back. Plus it makes you fat. I'm post-25, so I have to watch what I eat.

PLAYBOY: Tell us about the worst hangover you've ever had on tour.

SKINNER: We were in New York City, playing the Mercury Lounge. There was a lot more than alcohol involved. Our flight was at two P.M. the next day. We were still going at it when the sun came up, so we didn't bother going to sleep. On the way to the airport I was so sick. We're not used to American vans—they have different suspensions or something. American vans wallow around. I could have killed myself. I managed to sort myself out with a McDonald's at JFK. Fat and sugar are all it takes.

PLAYBOY: What happened to watching what you eat?

SKINNER: Yeah, right? I have to eat less fast food.

GRETCHEN WILSON'S

TOP FIVE

PARTY ALBUMS

1. ***YOU DO YOUR THING***
—MONTGOMERY GENTRY
2. ***MY HONKY TONK HISTORY***
—TRAVIS TRITT
3. ***HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR***
—BIG & RICH
4. ***WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN***
—KENNY CHESNEY
5. ***MARTINA***
—MARTINA MCBRIDE

BLACK EYED PEAS

PLAYBOY: Who came up with the idea of changing "Let's Get Retarded" to "Let's Get It Started"?

WILL.I.AM: Me. When we'd do arena gigs, the handicapped section would be next to the stage. I never felt comfortable doing "Let's Get Retarded" in front of the handicapped, so when we played big arenas we would change the song to "Let's Get It Started." The NBA wanted to use a song, and we gave them a version of "Let's Get It Started" to get the championship started.

PLAYBOY: What sort of music do you listen to at home?

WILL.I.AM: Bossa nova and samba. And old-school hip-hop. It ain't old school to me. I don't call Big Daddy Kane, Slick Rick and Special Ed old school. That's when hip-hop was at its purest. Back then it was really about the art form.

PLAYBOY: Where do you think music will be in five years?

WILL.I.AM: The phone company is going to own it. In five or 10 years music will be all about phones. A lot of phone companies already make most of their money from ring tones. But you can't have a ring tone with a good beat on it. That will reinforce melodies and songwriting structure so they can be translated over phones.

PLAYBOY: Who are some of your favorite songwriters?

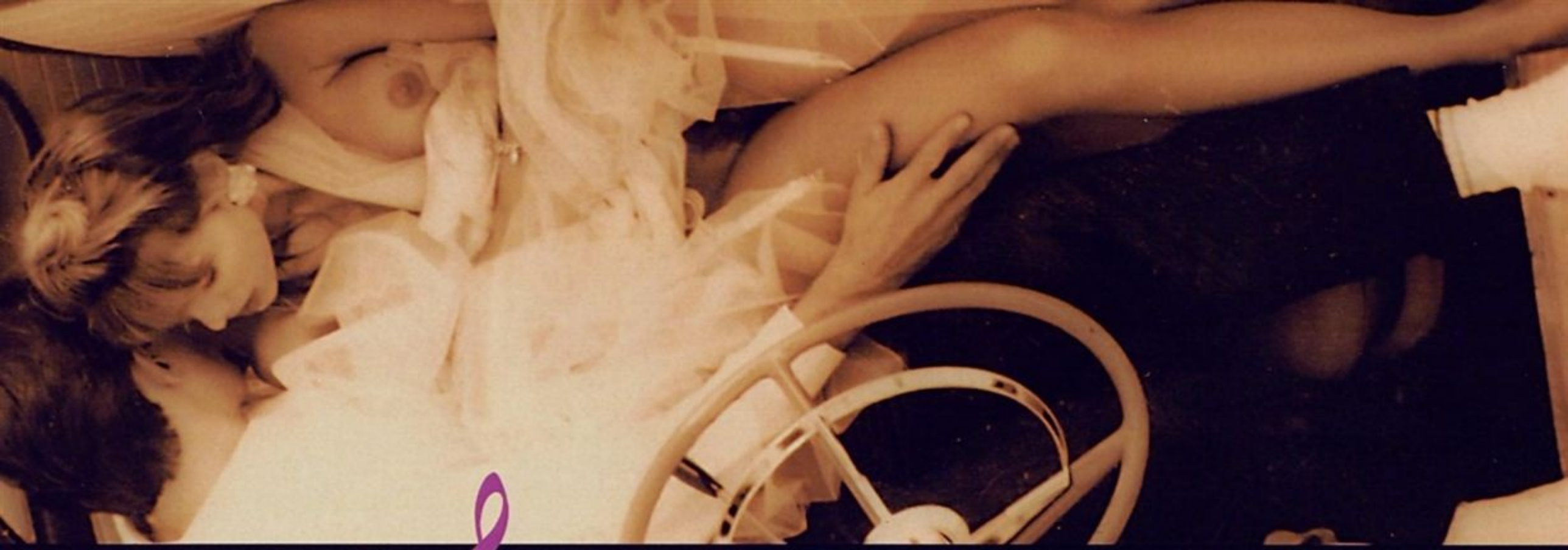
WILL.I.AM: Antonio Carlos Jobim; Stevie Wonder; Earth, Wind & Fire; Esthero.

PLAYBOY: Is it a challenge to have such a good-looking woman in the band?

WILL.I.AM: Yeah, that's a big challenge because I know she can sing. She's a good songwriter and a great performer. The challenge is how to make it to where people don't see you as just a hot little chick but really see you for what you came in for. You're not a model; you never wanted to be a burlesque artist. You're a fucking great singer. How do you make people notice you for that?

PLAYBOY: When is your new CD coming out?

WILL.I.AM: This spring. It's called *Monkey Business.*



GIVIN IT UP

ROCK STARS WERE VIRGINS ONCE TOO! TRUE STORIES OF LOVE, LOSS AND PARADISE BY THE DASHBOARD LIGHT

When you're a rock star, life consists of a few seminal moments: discovering *Never Mind the Bollocks,* losing your virginity, playing your first show and selling out the Garden seven nights in a row. (The first three are relatively easy, but few can do number four.) Because it's more fun to talk about sex than that other stuff, we cornered a few candid musicians and asked them the million-dollar question: How did you lose your virginity? If they could remember what they were listening to when the action went down, all the better. Now, do you remember your first time?

UNCLE KRACKER I don't remember exactly what happened. We were drinking. I was probably on acid. I could have been with a guy or a girl—who fucking knows? I remember how exciting but also how anticlimactic it was. I remember being happy to lose it and that it was fucking sweet. It was summertime, and we were down in this swampy area we called Sleepy Hollow. A fire was going, and there were a lot of drugs. A Steve Miller greatest-hits record was probably playing—all we did was drop dots and listen to Steve Miller. The details are sketchy since it was so long ago. Most people keep in touch and shit, don't they? Well, I was a scumbag. Ladies, be thankful you were nowhere near Detroit in 1989.

MELISSA AUF DER MAUR It was high school graduation weekend in 1989. My boyfriend and I were both 16. He went to a more prestigious school, and I went to an arty, experimental public school. I went to his graduation weekend, and a lot of rich kids and jocks who had big country homes were there. We camped outside one, and as the more bohemian one I was already feeling uncomfortable being at the rich kids' graduation. My boyfriend was an extreme mod, so when he pitched our tent he draped his Union Jack across it. As we were attempting to lose our virginity we got attacked by the jocks, who kicked our tent and yelled, "Fuck the mods!" We spent the next night in a hotel with Guns N' Roses' *Appetite for Destruction* playing on auto reverse. That's when we finally accomplished the deed.

TRAVIS BARKER, BLINK-182 I lost my virginity in seventh grade. I was just 13, and I lost it to a ninth grade cheerleader I'd always had a crush on. I was a scared kid with a weird haircut, and I didn't think a ninth grader would be into me. We were in music class together, and she would flirt with me and touch my dick. One night my friends and I skateboarded to her house. Her family had a trailer in the back, and she and I went in there and made out and did all that crazy stuff. I don't think we had any music playing. She was on top—she wasn't fucking around. It was very, "I'm older, I know more, and I'm about to take you to school." She was a badass, rad girl. Her vagina felt like hot jelly. I'd never felt one before. I don't believe it lasted long. Afterward it was awkward, and I didn't talk to her. I should have handled the situation better, but I didn't know. At 13 all you want to do is get laid. I remember walking home at three A.M. and thinking, I don't care if I have sex again; it's no big deal. Then she went around telling everyone she was pregnant, scaring the shit out of me. Later we became good friends and laughed about it.

JACK BLACK I'm not one of those people who like music playing when they make love. When I lost my virginity I played "Comfortably Numb" from Pink Floyd's *The Wall,* and that soured the whole music-while-boning experience for me. Music to bone to—I don't do that. I was 17 and a senior in high school. I'd had an experience with a girl before that, but you can't really call it the time I lost my virginity, because it was dry humping. It was hot. Our genitals were rubbing against each other with just a thin piece of fabric between us. It felt fantastic, and I shot my load in my pants. You could see the stain, and it was very embarrassing. She knew. She was sweet about it.

PHARRELL WILLIAMS I was 16. I was talking shit to this woman at my job—we worked at McDonald's—acting as if I'd fucked before, and I had to go through with it because I couldn't back down. She was an older lady, 28 or 29.

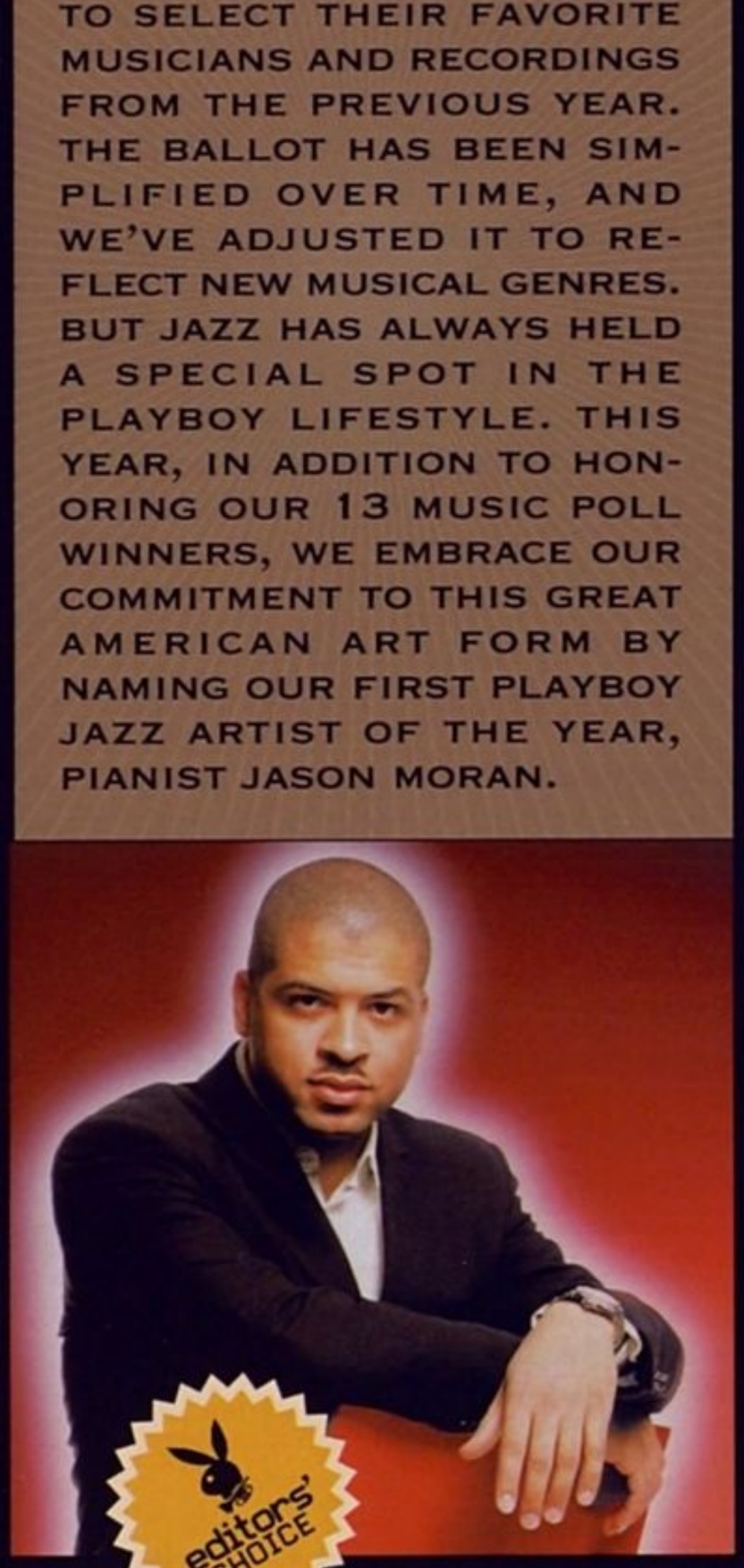
LIL JON My first time was with my then girlfriend in my mom's basement. It sure wasn't her first time. She said I did a good job, but she could have been lying.

LUDACRIS I was 17. She *(continued on page 148)*

PLAYBOY'S 2005

MUSIC POLL WINNERS

FOR THE PAST 48 YEARS WE'VE ASKED OUR READERS TO SELECT THEIR FAVORITE MUSICIANS AND RECORDINGS FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR. THE BALLOT HAS BEEN SIMPLIFIED OVER TIME, AND WE'VE ADJUSTED IT TO REFLECT NEW MUSICAL GENRES. BUT JAZZ HAS ALWAYS HELD A SPECIAL SPOT IN THE PLAYBOY LIFESTYLE. THIS YEAR, IN ADDITION TO HONORING OUR 13 MUSIC POLL WINNERS, WE EMBRACE OUR COMMITMENT TO THIS GREAT AMERICAN ART FORM BY NAMING OUR FIRST PLAYBOY JAZZ ARTIST OF THE YEAR, PIANIST JASON MORAN.



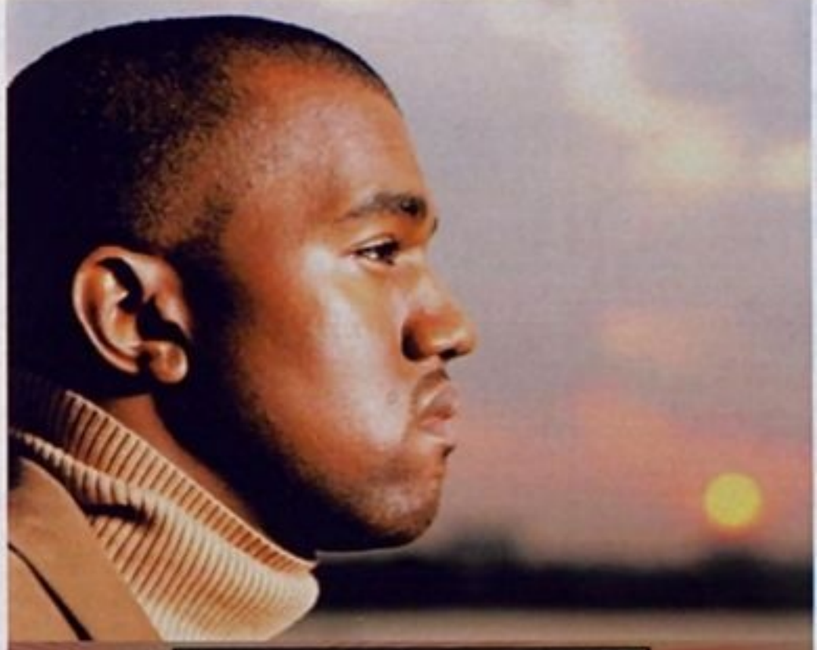
J | JAZZ ARTIST
JASON MORAN

JAZZ ARTIST OF THE YEAR

JASON MORAN got into jazz when his father played him a Thelonious Monk record back in Houston. "It flipped me out," the 30-year-old pianist says. Moran subsequently made his mark in 1997 as a member of Greg Osby's touring band. Since then he's established his reputation as a restless innovator and peerless leader. His latest release, *Same Mother* (Blue Note), is a dazzling work of recombinant barrelhouse blues. We've always admired Moran's ability to keep moving forward. "Jazz will continue to fold the world into its pocket, as it has always done," he says.

R | BEST ROCK
VELVET REVOLVER

Who'd have guessed a crew of recovering addicts would become rock's success story of 2004? VR sold 2 million copies of *Contraband* and earned three Grammy nods, begging the question, "Axl who?"

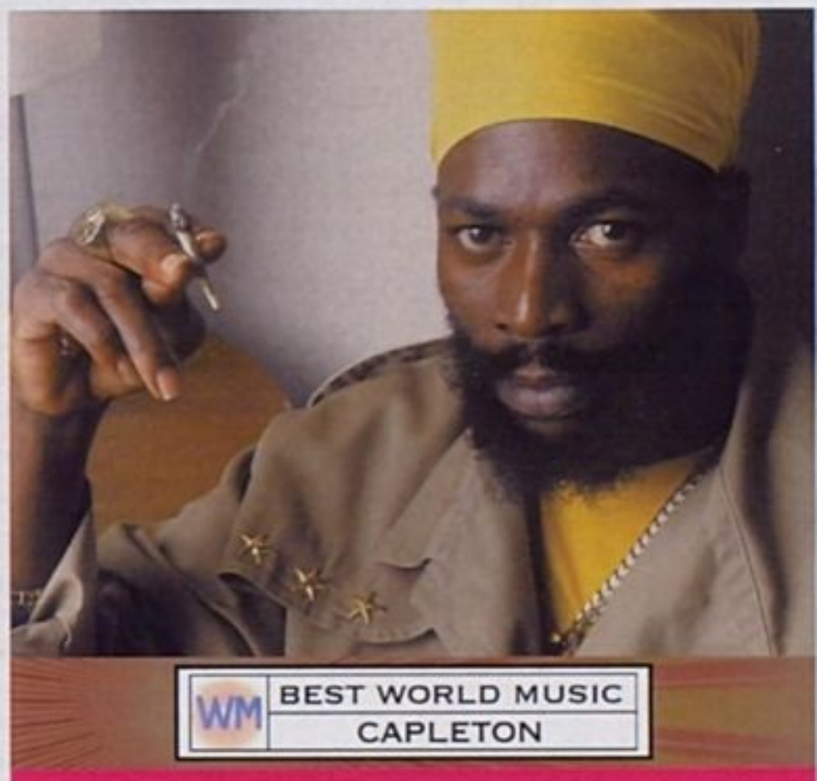


HH | BEST HIP-HOP
KANYE WEST

"I was robbed," the cocksure West said after he lost best new artist at one awards show. No worries—Chitown's college dropout nabbed 10 Grammy nominations and won our poll by a magnificent mile.

S | BEST SONG
"YEAH!"—USHER

We used to think Usher was just another baby-faced soul singer. Then he hooked up with Lil Jon and Ludacris, made the crunk hit of the year and got the girlies in the clubs dancing on the banquettes.

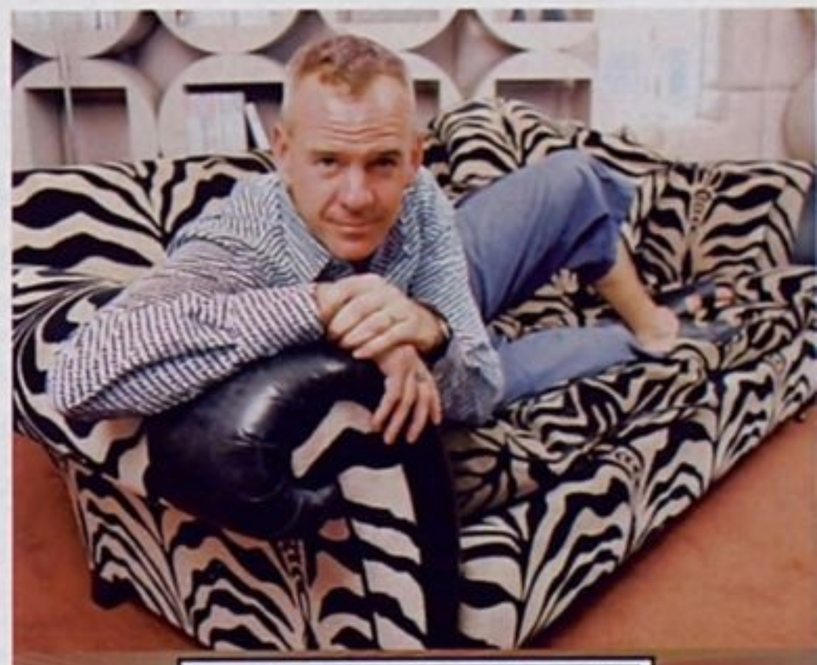


WM | BEST WORLD MUSIC
CAPLETON

Having (mostly) renounced the slackness of dancehall for a more righteous Rastafarianism, Capleton doesn't compromise on his frenetic riddims and in-your-face vocals on *Reign of Fire*.

J | BEST JAZZ
RAY CHARLES

He was a musical genius, an innovative mixer of gospel, R&B and rock, and a galvanizing force for racial tolerance during the ugly strife of the civil rights era. On his final album he thrills listeners again.



E | BEST ELECTRONIC
FATBOY SLIM

Big beat, house, electronica: Forget labels. Fatboy makes great music no matter what you call it. As dance floor fashions have wandered, he remains true to his mission of infusing beats with fun.

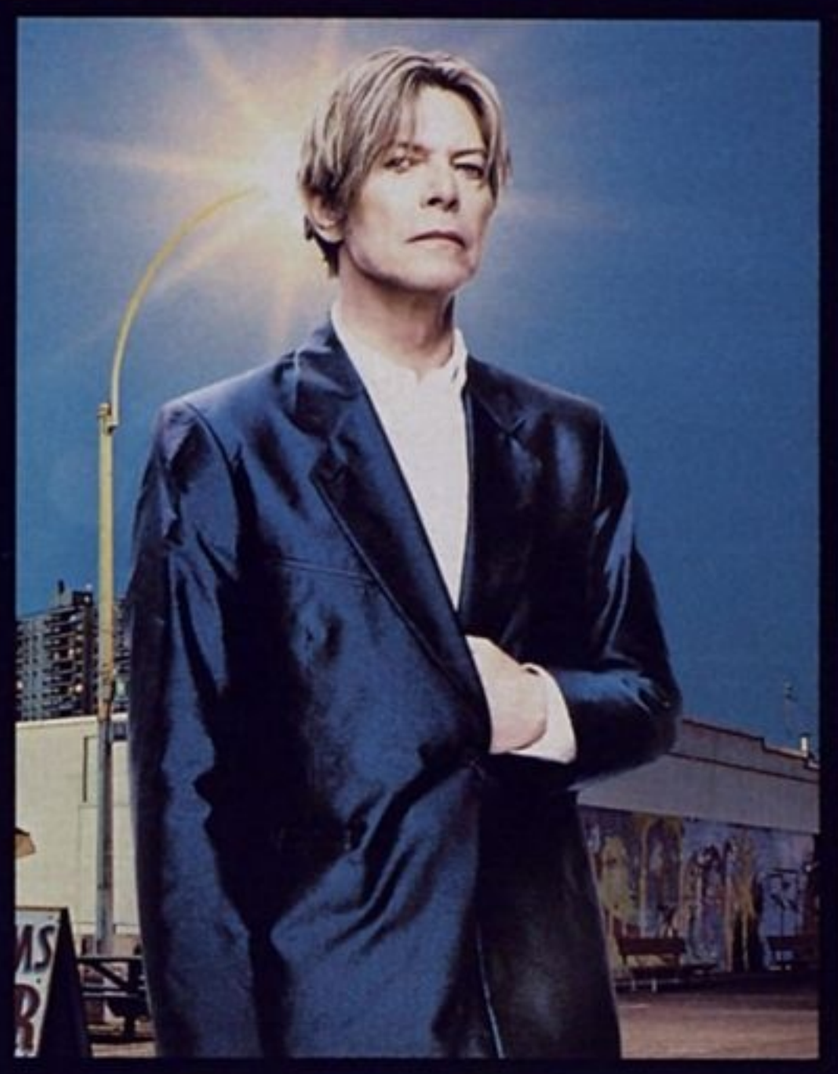
OUR READERS SELECT THEIR FAVORITES FROM 2004

LA BEST LIVE ACT
BEASTIE BOYS

Hip-hop has never been known for its live shows. But among their many innovations, the Beasties have changed that, too, bringing their warped sense of humor to the stadium circuit.

C BEST COUNTRY
GRETCHEN WILSON

This redneck woman from Pocahontas, Illinois caught our attention with her kickass odes to honky-tonks and tailgates—songs that owe as much to Skynyrd as they do to Tanya Tucker.



HOF DAVID BOWIE

HALL OF FAME

DAVID BOWIE has sustained his illustrious career by creating a series of extraordinary juxtapositions to refresh his music and image: Ziggy Stardust versus the Thin White Duke, glam wizard versus blue-eyed-soul singer, down-and-out in Berlin versus decked out in New York. And amazingly—given that he made his earliest recordings when now long defunct acts like the Monkees, Herman's Hermits and the Hollies dominated the charts—Bowie remains capable of making new music that matters. (Way back when, he changed his name from Davey Jones because of the Monkee with the same name.) This chameleon first enchanted America in 1972 with his *Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars* album and tour—a stage act still considered a benchmark for outrageous showmanship. When he tired of that persona, he moved on to others, catalogued in his string of diverse hits: "Rebel Rebel," "Fame," "Golden Years," "Heroes," "Under Pressure," "Let's Dance." Then he founded an indie band, Tin Machine, and eventually tackled electronic music. As a producer Bowie helped other artists—including the Stooges, Lou Reed and Mott the Hoople—reach new peaks. The success of Bowie's most recent tour proves his star is still bright. Wham, bam, thank you, ma'am.

RI BEST REISSUE
BLACK SABBATH

When Ozzy and his mates emerged in 1970, they sounded as if they were from another planet—heavy and dark in a way that nobody else was. All that otherworldly power spews forth on *Black Box*.

ST BEST SOUNDTRACK
METALLICA: SOME KIND OF MONSTER

The soundtrack to one of the best music documentaries since *Gimme Shelter* captures the volatile rockers high and low, from two versions of the title track to deep cuts from the early days.

BT NEXT BIG THING
THE KILLERS

This Las Vegas band manages to capture the gloom and seediness hiding behind the glittering neon of its hometown and transform it into a sound as compelling as any new band's.

BD BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENT
LENNY KRAVITZ

He copped a Gap ad with "Lady." But despite Sarah Jessica Parker writhing around to that tune, his *Baptism* sounds less like a rocking revival than a fallen preacher floating on past glories.

◀ Rogue Audio M-150 monoblock amp.

▼ Avid Diva turntable.

Sound+Art

Where is spending $20,000 on a

▼ Arcam Full Metal Jacket CD 33 player.

stereo a bargain? In the world of high-end audio • By Kyle Kolbe

It happens to every man at some point in his life. And while it can be worrisome, it's also perfectly normal and nothing to be ashamed of. All you did was outgrow your stereo. But now that your ears have matured and it's painful to listen to Mahler's Third Symphony or Shellac's *At Action Park* through that tinny, pumped-up, artificial-sounding insult on your shelf, you're worried. Worried that you'll have to drop six figures on your next system to be satisfied. Well, there's something you should know: High-end audio equipment doesn't need to be insanely expensive. Regular old expensive will do just fine. In other words, yes, you have to drop some dough, but as Richard Hardesty, editor of *Audio Perfectionist Journal* (audioperfectionist.com), puts it, "you don't need to take out a second mortgage to afford a high-quality stereo. The highest price tags are seldom an indicator of the highest quality." Just don't try explaining that to the staff at most audiophile snob shops, whose sole mission is to make sure you walk out the door significantly lighter than when you walked in. What they won't tell you is that you can get 90 percent of the sound quality for a tenth of what they'd like to fleece you for. Put it this way: The system we've assembled here costs around $20,000, and it's a steal. We'd put it up against a typical $200,000 setup without thinking twice.

▼ Meadowlark Audio's Kestrel 2 speakers and Blackbird subwoofer.

▼ Rogue Audio Magnum 99 preamp.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEORGE GEORGIOU

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 147.

TURNTABLE Vinyl is the original high-resolution audio format, but decks from a top manufacturer such as Clearaudio can approach $20,000. Leave them to the people who believe price equals quality, and pick up Avid's Diva for $2,500. A spring-suspension system, a heavy platter, an outboard motor and a plinthless design help this table sound as clean and dynamic as any digital source but with analog's rhythmic thrust and superior imaging. Your King Tubby dub plates will never sound the same again.

CD PLAYER Any stereo has to play today's most popular format, the CD, and decent playback makes a huge difference. There are stupefying values in today's market—$300 units that'll play CDs, DVDs and MP3s and then run to the store to buy smokes for you. But be strong. It's a digital format, but what comes out of the back of the player is all analog. The conversion between the two is what separates the harsh reproduction of mass-market players from the natural sound of the premium set. The smart money's on Arcam's Full Metal Jacket CD 33 upsampling CD player ($2,500), with a damped chassis (to absorb vibrations), dual nonswitching power supplies and excellent filtering in the digital-analog conversion. Trust us, you'll hear the difference by the end of the first note.

The Damage

Avid Diva turntable	$2,500
Arcam CD 33 player	$2,500
Rogue Audio Magnum 99 preamp	$2,500
Rogue Audio M-150 monoblock amps (2)	$4,000
Meadowlark Audio Kestrel 2 speakers	$2,000
Meadowlark Audio Blackbird subwoofer	$2,500
SolidSteel 6.3 audio rack	$1,000
SolidSteel amp stands (2)	$600
AudioQuest Cheetah interconnects	$2,100
AudioQuest Mont Blanc speaker cable	$1,400
PS Audio xStream Prelude AC line (six)	$774
PS Audio Juice Bar power strip	$200
Total	$22,074

Analog Rules

Vinyl's glorious second act

Reports of the LP's death have been greatly exaggerated. Fact is, the format never went away (it just got a little sleepy). At this point it's probably easier to find your favorite albums on new 180-gram pressings than to wait for the major labels to release them in either of the leading high-definition digital audio formats (DVD-Audio and Super Audio CD). And in terms of emotional punch, nothing can compare.

Timing and Phase

Most speakers contain three separate drivers for handling music's highs, middles and lows. But since the three propagate sound differently, they need to travel varied distances for their sound waves to reach your ears as one. Waves arriving slightly out of sync with one another lack what's called timing coherence. Bad timing kills your sense of where each instrument is located, and because your brain must compensate you experience "listening fatigue." Buying phase-correct speakers (such as the Kestrel 2s we recommend) will let you enjoy your music longer and hear each part more clearly and distinctly.

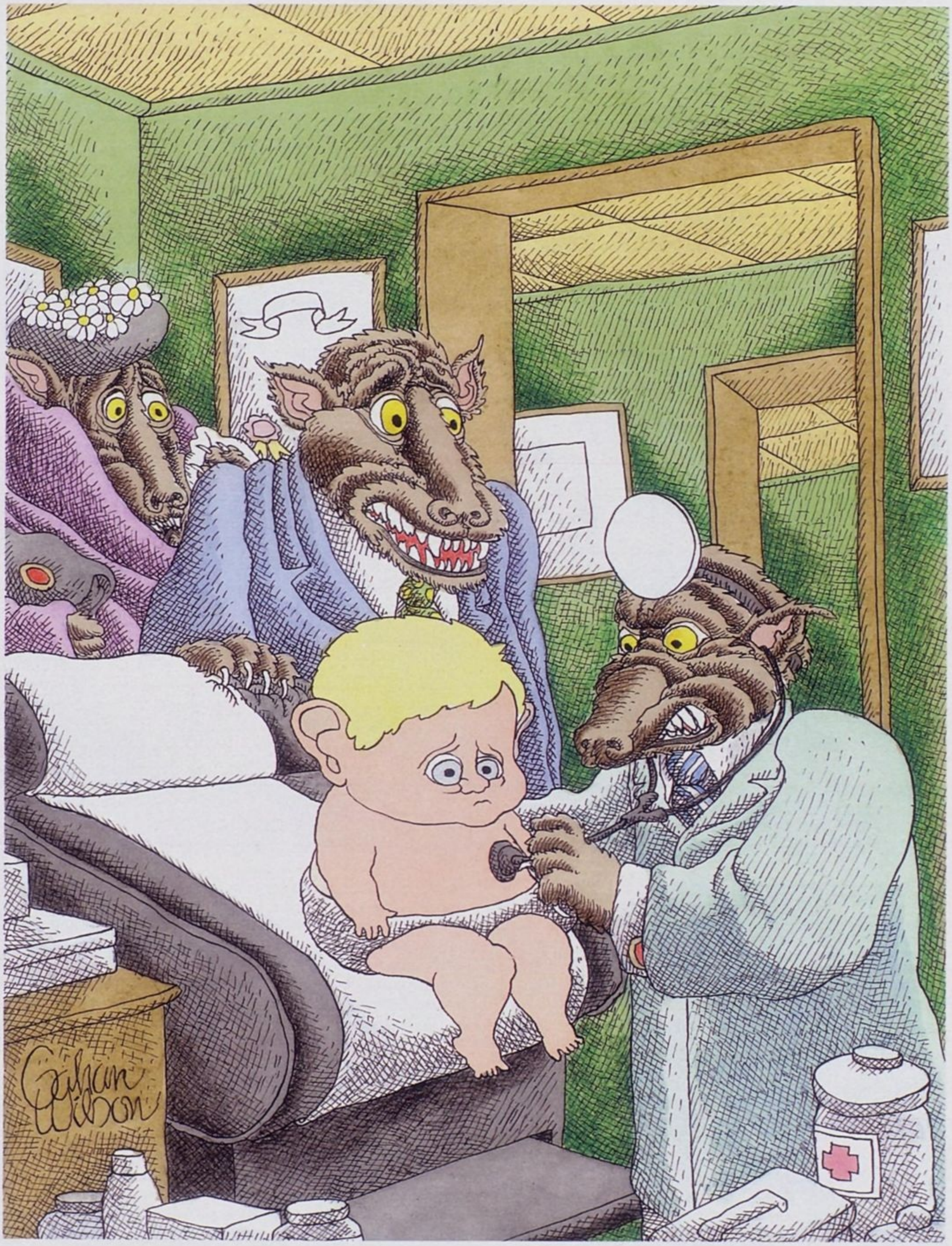
AMPLIFICATION The amp is the easiest place to skimp and the most crucial area not to. Typical home theater receivers feature everything from surround sound to synthetically altered speaker output that can make them sound like the Royal Albert Hall. Fun, but none of it is musically accurate. These boxes are exercises in extreme compromise. Your first step toward enlightenment is upgrading to a separate preamp and power amp. Start with a preamp that has analog gain (digital gain controls toss away bits of the digital stream at lower volumes). You can pay up to $15,000 for one of these, but you'll be just as happy with Rogue Audio's $2,500 Magnum 99 tube preamp. The tubes will lend magic to your music while remaining true to the original signal, and the 99 provides amazing separation of instruments in the stereo image. For your power amp, you're looking for large, clean and stable power reserves. Monoblock amps devote a separately housed amplifier to each channel, and Rogue Audio's M-150 monoblock tube amps glow with a calm power, unafraid of all but the most extreme speaker loads (they can push up to 150 watts each). Price: $4,000 for the pair.

SPEAKERS They're the most important part of a stereo, yet the vast majority of speakers on the market today—from a $200 bookshelf pair to $40,000 floor standers—fail to accomplish the fundamental duty of all audio equipment: making the output signal match the input signal. That means reproducing the frequency, timing and amplitude of the original sound. And while most speakers get frequency and amplitude right, only three manufacturers manage to nail time coherence: Vandersteen Audio, Thiel and Meadowlark Audio. We went with Meadowlark's Kestrel 2 for its musicality, beauty and value. Two grand a pair buys you sloped baffles, first-order crossovers, high-quality drivers and an excellent transmission-line bass-loading design. They'll all but let you hear the sound of fingerprints drying on a fret board.

SUBWOOFER Your subwoofer should be neither seen nor heard. Its only job is to pick up where your loudspeakers roll off. Meadowlark's new Blackbird subwoofer ($2,500) fills in the Kestrel 2's bottom octave with bass that gives your music a solid, self-effacing floor to stand on. Its 1,000-watt amp is isolated in a subenclosure apart from the rest of the box's electronics, and its 10-inch-long throw woofer has real extension down to 20 hertz. If you're sick of slurred, boomy bass that drags, then the Blackbird is your drug of choice.

INTERCONNECTS AND MOUNTING Listening to this setup through a bunch of old thin wires is like making a frozen margarita with Patrón Platinum. You're paying an awful lot of money for something you won't even taste. We used AudioQuest's Cheetah interconnects ($2,100 for 2.5 meters) between the CD player, preamp and amps. The Kestrel 2 speakers receive their signal through AudioQuest Mont Blanc speaker cable ($1,400 for a pair of eight-footers). To stabilize everything, we placed the turntable, CD player and preamp on a SolidSteel 6.3 three-shelf equipment stand ($1,000). The monoblocks went on SolidSteel's Model B amplifier stands ($300 in silver). Finally, for clean power, we used PS Audio's xStream Prelude AC line ($129) plugged into a PS Audio Juice Bar outlet strip ($200).

MOMENT OF TRUTH After 45 minutes of switching on the components in sequence and waiting for them to warm up, the stereo was alive (*Aliiive!* Sorry). We played the Pixies' *Surfer Rosa* on LP, followed by Harnoncourt's version of Mozart's *Requiem* on CD. Somewhere in there we lost track of time. By three A.M. we had come to a shocking conclusion: This system sounds really good. And it will last decades. All you'll have to worry about now is your electricity bill and your friends' sudden unwillingness to vacate your couch.



"He turns into this horrible thing every full moon!"

Amazing GRACE

With a hand from Howard Stern, Miss March's wish comes true

Many women visit *The Howard Stern Show* in hopes of becoming a Playmate; Jillian is the first to succeed. When PLAYBOY Senior Photo Editor Kevin Kuster disclosed that she'd been selected, Jillian shed tears of joy.

Last year Katharine Walter, mother of beautiful 19-year-old Jillian Grace, wrote a letter to Howard Stern. She told him her daughter's dream was to be a PLAYBOY Centerfold and asked him for an evaluation. Stern did not become America's favorite shock jock by being slow to seize opportunity. "I've got to get this broad on the phone, at least," he said. "My dream in high school was to do tons of coke, but my mom didn't go out and score for me." Stern was joking about the last part (we think), but soon Jillian and her mom had trekked from Washington, Missouri to the Stern show in New York. Almost immediately everyone in the studio—including PLAYBOY Senior Photo Editor Kevin Kuster, who also flew in for the occasion—became enamored with Jillian's radiant smile, knockout natural body and soft-spoken, girl-next-door appeal. "Most women who come in here never end up in PLAYBOY," said Stern. "They think they're hot, and they're not. Jillian looks like a Playmate to me in every sense of the word. Boom!" Hef agreed, and Stern got dubbed Deputy Editor for his scouting skills.

"Howard is my favorite comedian and one of my heroes, and I'd like to thank him for having faith in me," says Jillian, noting that when she moved from the more populous Springfield, Missouri four years ago, listening to Stern helped make her new rural surroundings more tolerable. Now she has adjusted. "Everyone in California asks me what we do in Missouri," she says. "Well, we have fun. There are a lot of open fields in the area, and we build bonfires in them. Everybody parks their trucks close together and turns on their stereos, and we have a great time.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG

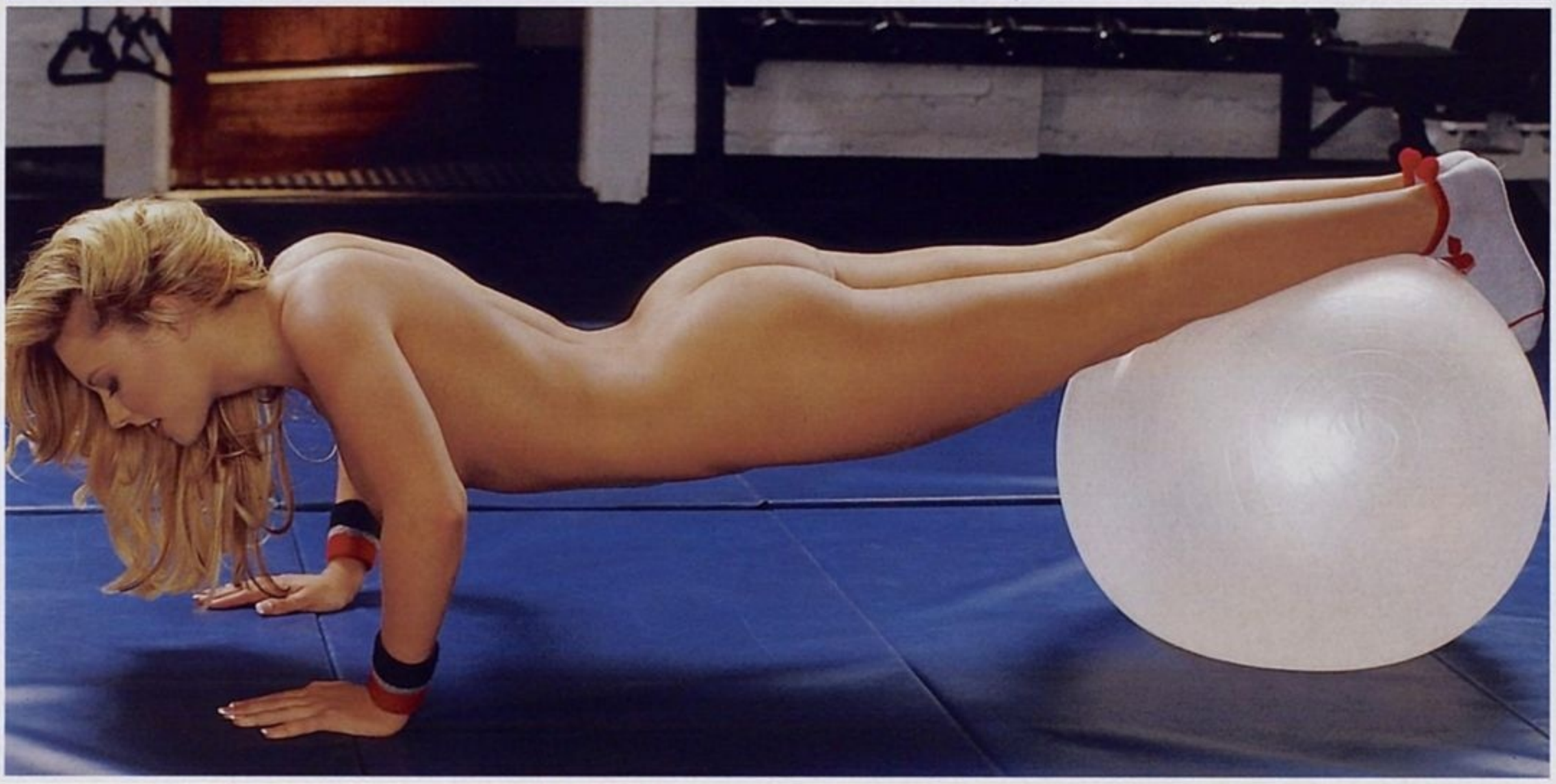
Nobody can break anything in a field."

Breaking, as in into a sweat, is something Jillian knows a lot about. She's a certified personal trainer, a career that has definitely influenced her views. "A big muscular back is my favorite part of a man's body," she says. "But looks aren't really important. Attraction is more about having fun with a guy, and kissing is a big part of having fun. That's going pretty far on a first date, though. I still have small-town-girl values, I guess."

Nothing wrong with that, particularly when the small-town girl possesses an intoxicating sweetness. Jillian even blushes when we ask about the naughty Girl Scout costume she wore to Hef's Halloween bash. "It was a green midriff shirt that tied in the front, with thigh-high stockings and a short skirt with patches sewn on," she says. "One patch had lollipops that said LICK ME

(text concluded on page 140)

Jillian is proud to show off her all-natural physique. "I definitely hope to stay this way," she says. "In Missouri my breasts are big, but in Los Angeles they're just average. I'm happy with my body, though, and I would not want to change it just to please other people."

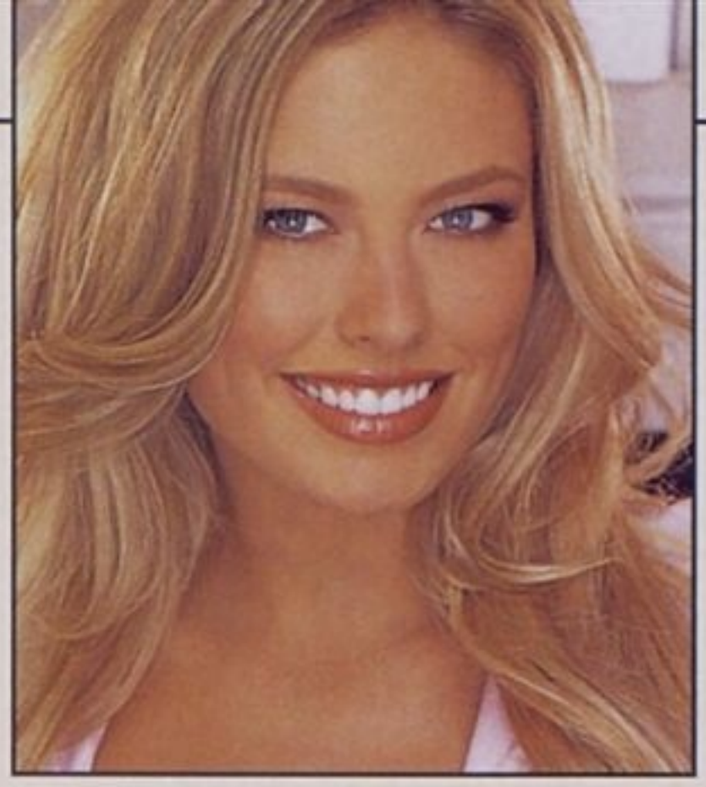


See more of Miss March at cyber.playboy.com.

MISS MARCH

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

Jillian Grace



PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Jillian Grace

BUST: 36 WAIST: 24 HIPS: 36

HEIGHT: 5'5" WEIGHT: 117

BIRTH DATE: Dec 20, 1985 BIRTHPLACE: Arkansas / Home: Washington, MO

AMBITIONS: I plan to pursue modeling & acting. I would love to appear in a workout video.

TURN-ONS: A guy who BBQs, someone who knows how to hit all the right spots, a sense of humor.

TURNOFFS: When someone blows their nose in front of me, conceited people & liars.

BEST ADVICE I EVER GOT: My mom always told me to strive for my dreams as though I could not fail; just have a backup plan.

WHY I LOVE MISSOURI: If you do not like the weather today, it could be totally different tomorrow; St Louis & field parties.

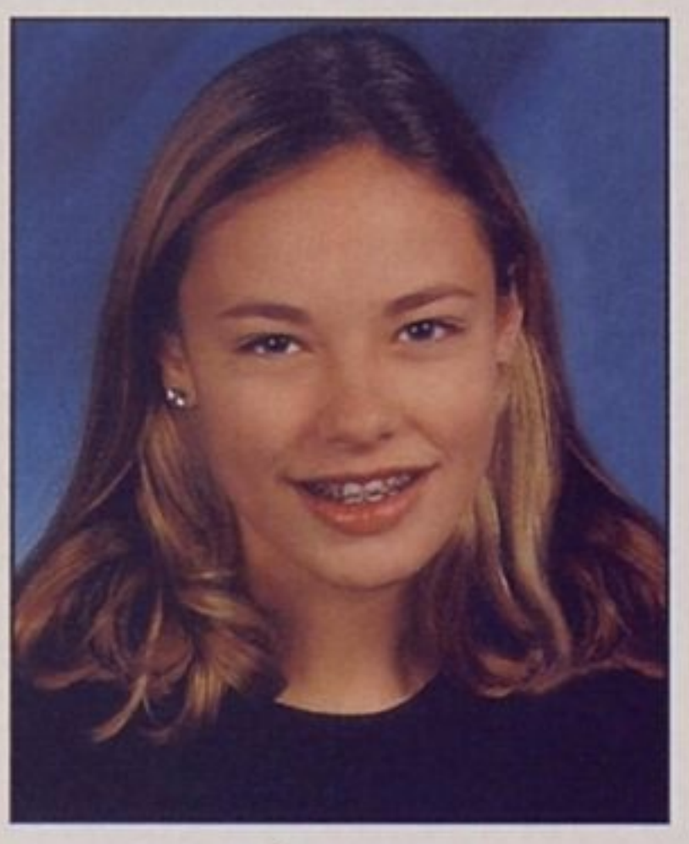
TV SHOWS I CAN'T MISS: Reno 911!, Howard Stern, Desperate Housewives.

SEXIEST MAN ALIVE: Steven Tyler of Aerosmith.

IF MONEY WAS NOT AN ISSUE, I'D BUY: A miniature-golf course.

Swim Team
Age 10

Friend's horse & me
Age 12



Age 15

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

A rebel group in Colombia broke into a convent and rounded up all the nuns. The guerrilla leader announced, "We have been in the jungle for months without female companionship. We apologize in advance, but we are going to have sex with every single one of you."

One of the young nuns shielded the Mother Superior and said, "No! Not Mother Superior!"

The Mother Superior pushed her aside and said, "He said every single one of us."

A woman seeking a divorce fell in love with her lawyer even though he was a married man. After the divorce decree, she visited him in his office and said, "Isn't there some way we can be together?"

Taking her by the shoulders, the lawyer said, "Snatched drinks in grimy bars, talking dirty over the phone, hurried meetings in sordid motel rooms—is that really what you want for us?"

"No, no," she sobbed.

"Well," the divorce lawyer said, "it was just a suggestion."

A third-grade teacher asked one of her students to spell the word *straight*. The boy did so. Then the teacher asked, "What is the definition of the word?"

The boy replied, "Without ice."

Vintners in the Napa Valley who produce pinot blancs and pinot grigios have developed a new hybrid grape. It acts as an antidiuretic and will reduce the number of trips an older person has to make to the toilet during the night. They will be marketing the new wine as pinot more.

How is sex like music? For every person who pays for it, hundreds are getting it for free.

Two friends agreed to meet for drinks after work. One arrived late and said, "Sorry, but on my way here I saw three punks slapping my old boss around."

His friend asked, "Did you stop to help?"

The guy said, "No. I figured the three of them could handle it."

A naked woman walked into a bar and asked if she could get a drink. The bartender said, "No problem, but it doesn't look like you'll be able to pay for it."

The woman pointed to her pussy and said, "Will this do?"

The bartender took a look and said, "Got anything smaller?"

Three married couples moved into town and wanted to join the local church. The minister told them that before they could be admitted, they had to abstain from sex for 30 days. One month later they returned. The minister asked them if they had fulfilled the requirement. The elderly couple said they'd had no trouble abstaining. The middle-aged couple said the first two weeks were difficult, but they managed to abstain. The third couple were newlyweds. The husband said, "We were doing okay until my wife dropped a can of paint."

The minister asked, "A can of paint?"

The husband said, "Yes. When she bent over to pick it up, I couldn't control myself and ravished her on the spot."

The minister said, "Well, I'm sorry. But given that fact, you won't be welcome in our church."

The husband said, "I understand. We're no longer welcome in Home Depot, either."

Why do mice have small balls?

Not many of them know how to dance.

What do you call two dozen rednecks at an orgy?

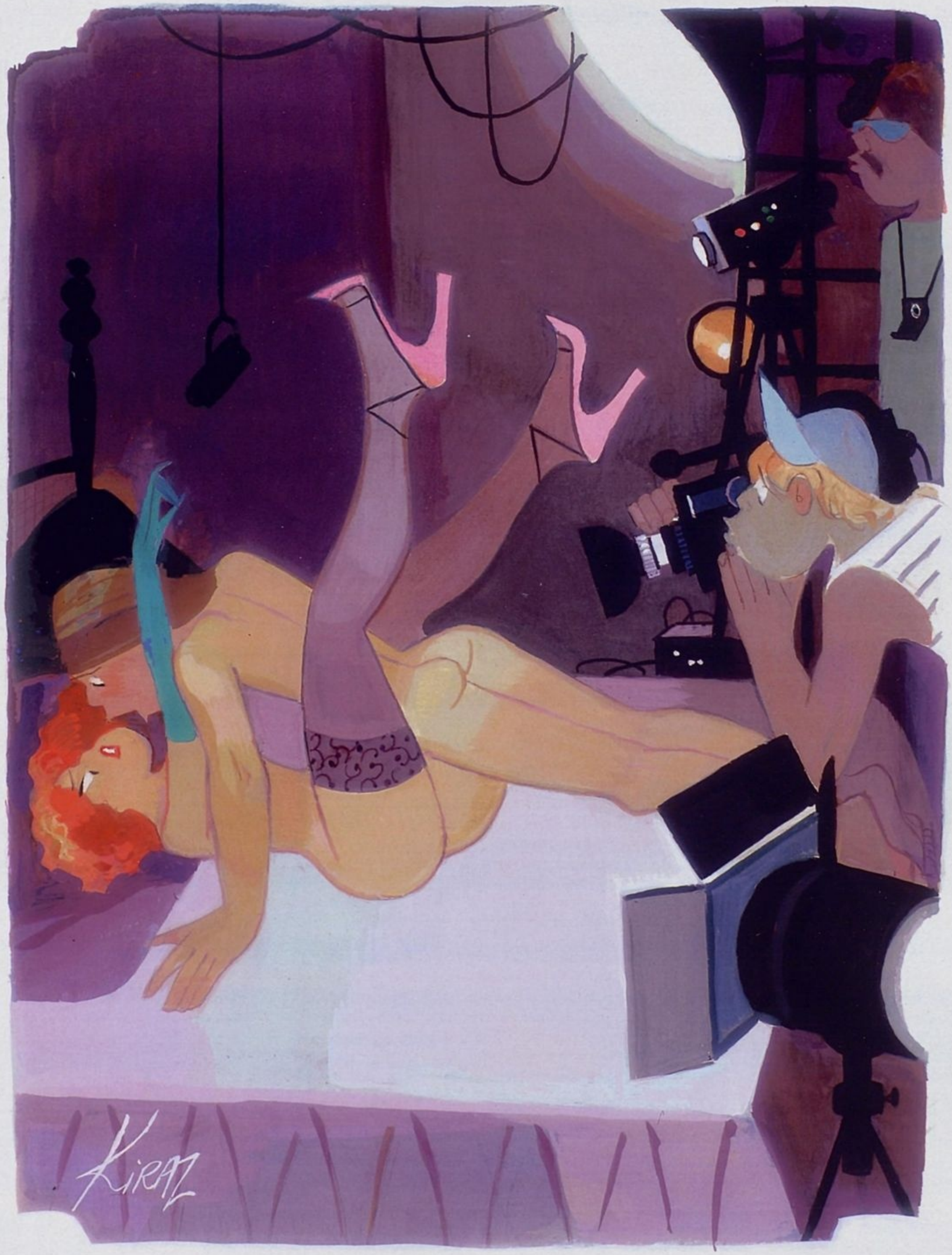
A family reunion.

A man complained to a friend, "I had it all—money, a beautiful house, a big car, the love of a beautiful woman—and now it's all gone."

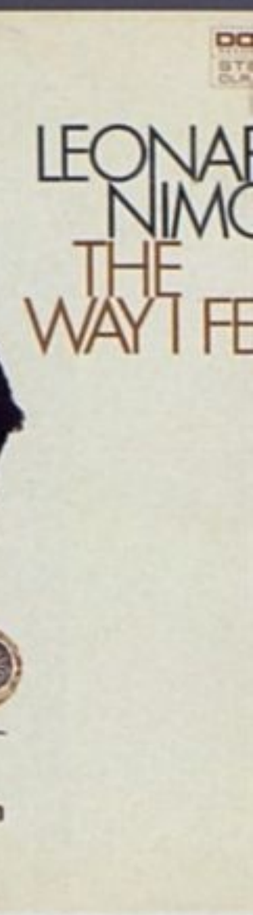
His friend asked, "What happened?"

The man said, "My wife found out. Now she has it all."

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, *730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. $100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected.*



"I'm usually quite shy when I meet a girl for the first time."



VANITY VINYL

TRUE CELEBRITY MEANS CUTTING AN ALBUM

BY JAKE AUSTEN

Top Five Albums by Sensitive Tough Guys

LORNE GREENE, *Welcome to the Ponderosa* (1964). Pa Cartwright, who cut six albums, scored a hit with his mostly spoken ballad "Ringo." Performed with a "pure, naked virility" (in the words of Henry Mancini), it went to number one.

RICHARD ROUNDTREE, *The Man From Shaft* (1972). Roundtree's voice is thin, but soul producer Eugene McDaniels saves most of the cuts. Best lyric: "I'm a private eye, with private plans/I'll make private love, with gentle hands."

BURT REYNOLDS, *Ask Me What I Am* (1974). Manly yet gentle love songs.

TELLY SAVALAS, *Telly* (1974). The TV chrome dome admits in the liner notes that "singing is not my bag." His cover of the Beatles' "Something" sounds as if the something is on his shoulder and he's challenging you to knock it off.

STEVEN SEAGAL, *Songs From the Crystal Cave* (2004). Moody vocals and wailing blues guitar from the ponytailed martial artist. Available only in France.

Two Tiny Dancers

HERVÉ VILLECHAIZE, "Why" (1980). Despite his fear of being infantilized (he often grew facial hair when *Fantasy Island* wasn't shooting), Villechaize agreed to contribute to an album called *Children of the World*. In a voice that falls somewhere between those of an ill child and a healthy Muppet, he asks the timeless question "Why...do...people...have to fight?" To his credit Villechaize seems ignorant of how odious the recording is, as evidenced by a TV appearance archived at treasurehiding.com/random/why.htm.

GARY COLEMAN, "The Outlaw and the Indian" (1987). This car crash of a rap single features Coleman and his advisor at the time, a Michael Jackson imitator named Dion Mial, who is "rapping with my latest squaw" in the feyest voice possible when Coleman interrupts, "Hey, Indian dude, don't cop a 'tude, don't start no feud!" Coleman maintains a bit of his dignity by not uttering "Whachu talkin' 'bout, Indian?"

Best Celebrity Album to Play During Sex

MARCEL MARCEAU, *The Best of Marcel Marceau* (1970). Both sides are silent until the last minute, which is filled with applause. Make sure to put down the needle exactly 19 minutes before you bring it home, lest the clapping seem either premature or sarcastic.

12 WORST CELEBRITY ALBUMS

12 **RICHARD PETTY, BOBBY ALLISON ET AL., *NASCAR GOES COUNTRY***

11 **KEVIN BACON, *GETTING THERE***

10 **COREY FELDMAN, *STILL SEARCHING FOR SOUL***

9 **ROBERT ENGLUND, *FREDDY'S GREATEST HITS***

8 **CARL LEWIS, *MODERN MAN***

7 **FABIO, *FABIO AFTER DARK***

6 **JEFF BRIDGES, *BE HERE SOON***

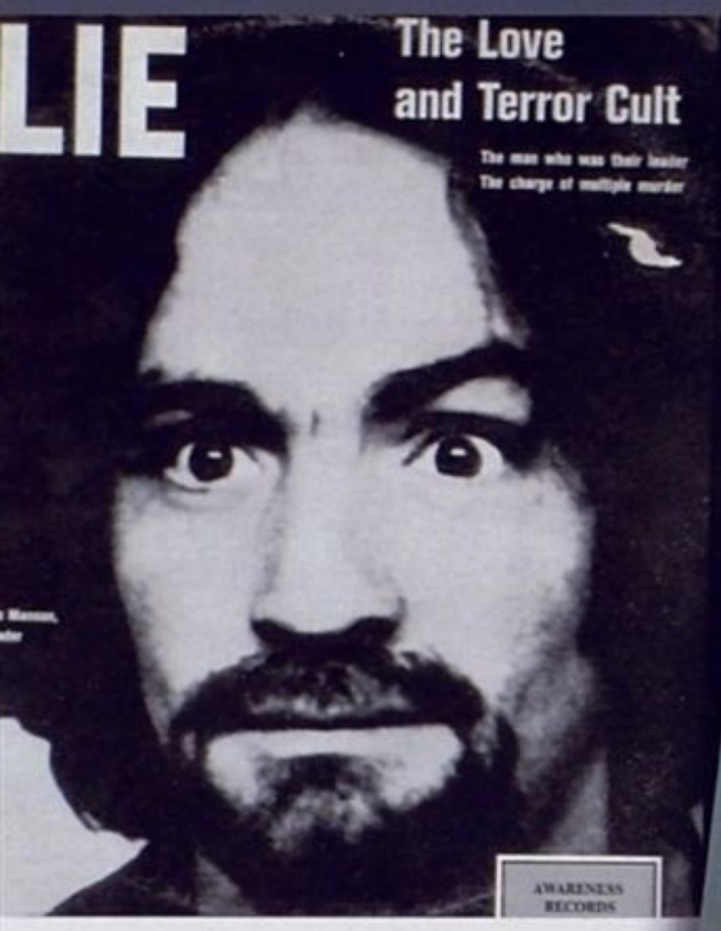
5 **ROGER CLINTON, *NOTHING GOOD COMES EASY***

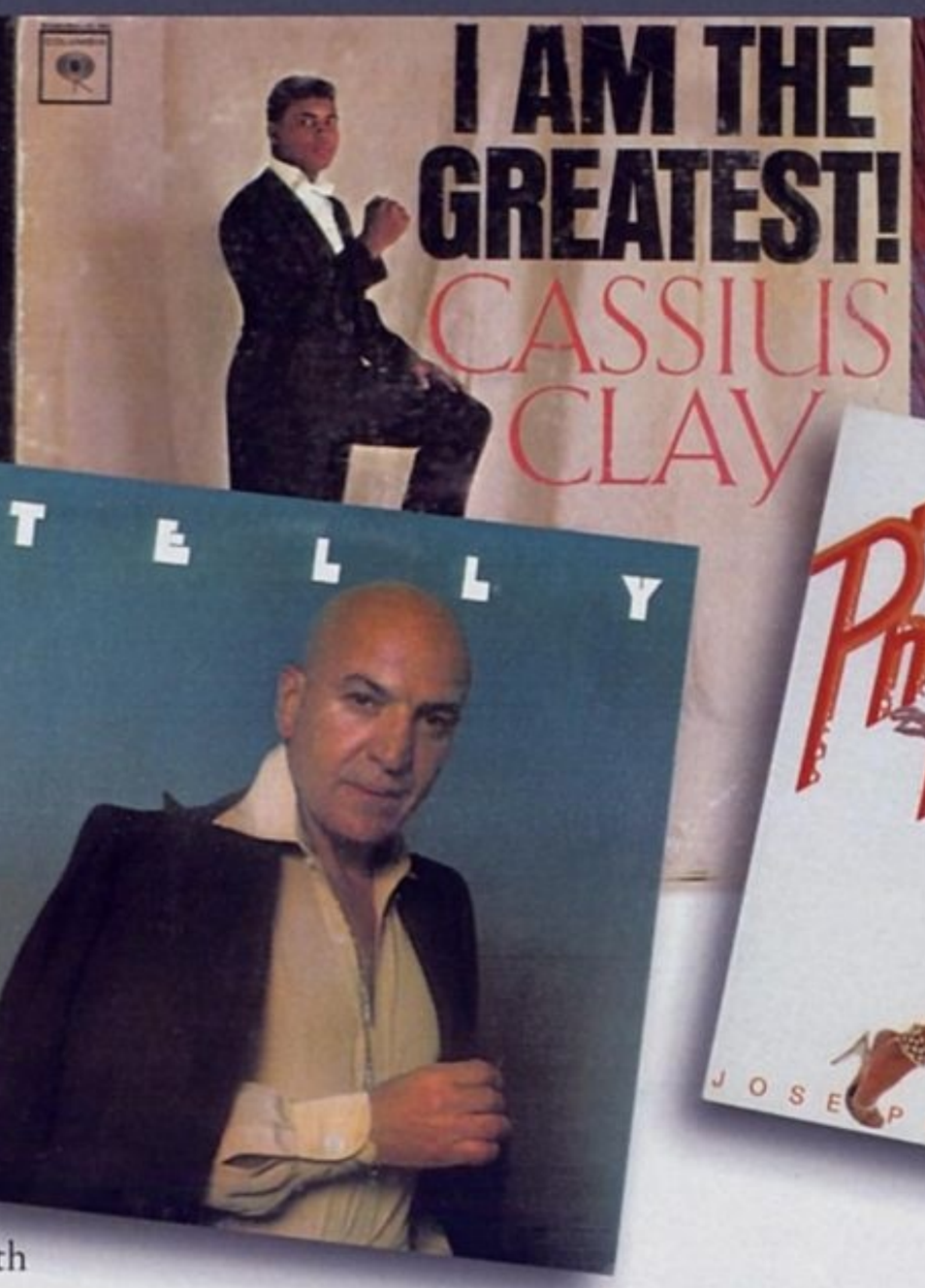
4 **DON JOHNSON, *HEARTBEAT***

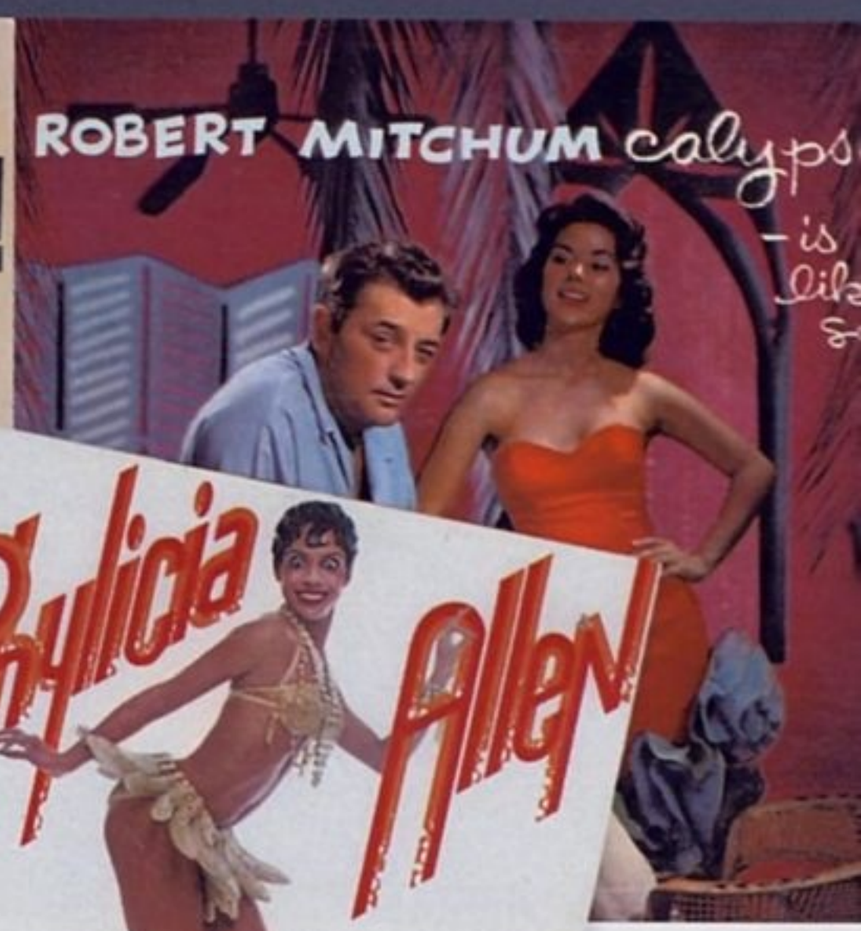
3 **DUSTIN DIAMOND, *SALTY THE POCKETKNIFE***

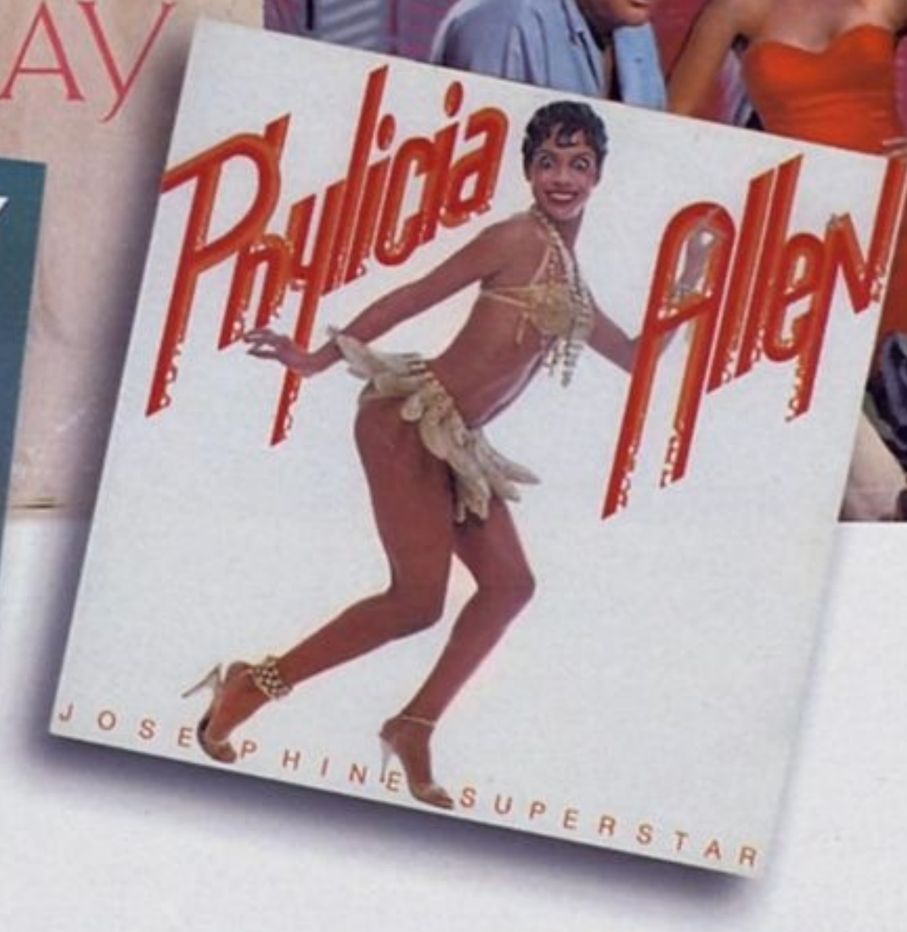
2 **JIM BELUSHI, *36-22-36***

1 **AND THE WORST CELEBRITY ALBUM OF ALL TIME IS...**









11 Songs by Sexpots

MAE WEST, "Twist and Shout" (1966). The 73-year-old alternates between faking climax and singing with such vibrato she sounds like Miss Piggy.

JAYNE MANSFIELD, "Suey" (1967). Mansfield coos gibberish over a guitar some believe is played by Jimi Hendrix.

BRIGITTE BARDOT, "Comic Strip" (1968). This duet with troll-like French sex god Serge Gainsbourg has Bardot using comic-book sound effects that some hear as metaphors for orgasm—"Shebam! Pow! Blop! Wizz!" Others don't.

ANDREA TRUE, "More More More (Pt. 1)" (1976). When the former porn star asks, "How do you like it? How do you like it?" only a fool doesn't respond, "Quite a bit! Quite a bit!"

PHYLICIA ALLEN, "Josephine Superstar" (1978). Before becoming TV's Clair Huxtable, Allen was married to the cop from Village People and collaborated on a disco concept album about the life of Josephine Baker. It features the sexiest celebrity LP cover ever.

SAMANTHA FOX, "Touch Me (I Want Your Body)" (1986). The British model hit number one in 15 countries and had the largest breasts of anyone who released a record in 1986, other than Barry White.

KIM BASINGER, "The Crime" (1989). This call-and-response seduction between Basinger and Prince is the least sexy thing either has ever done.

ALYSSA MILANO, "Kimi Wa Sunshine Boy" (1989). The *Who's the Boss?* star cut five albums that were hits overseas. This song is special: It's in Japanglish.

NAOMI CAMPBELL, "Cool as Ice (Everybody Get Loose)" (1991). The short-tempered supermodel launched her musical career by singing a duet with Vanilla Ice. Costly error.

PRINCESS STEPHANIE, "In the Closet" (1992). The Monaco royal's pop stardom peaked with a cameo on Michael Jackson's *Dangerous*. Sharing a song about being in the closet with Jacko—it's a fairy tale come true.

PARIS HILTON, "Screwed" (2005?). A Miami club crowd booed Hilton as she lip-synched this single from her forthcoming debut album. But if the video is anything like her last one, thumbs up.

Most Outrageous Celebrity Album

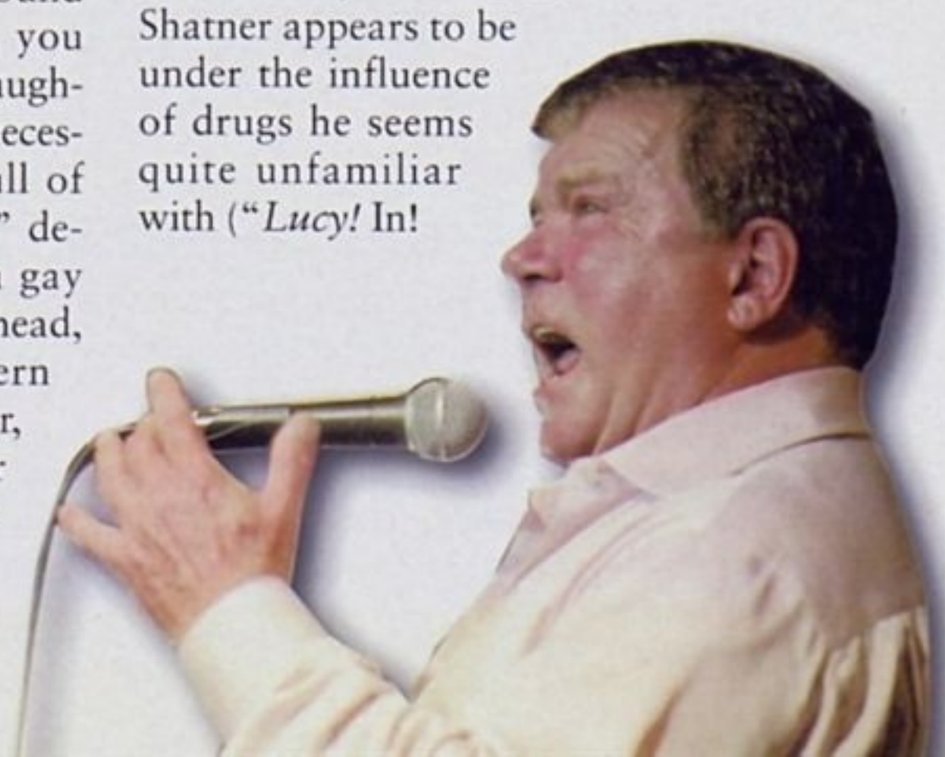
PETER WYNGARDE, *Peter Wyngarde* (1970). The star of the U.K. detective show *Department S* resisted efforts to capitalize on his fame until RCA gave him full artistic control. He then delivered what may be the most deliberately insane album ever recorded. The standout track is "Rape," on which Wyngarde reviews how rape is conducted around the world (Italy: "Oh, Madonna, you didn't offer, for that I'll have your daughter"; France: "Rape is hardly ever necessary"; U.S.: "American rape is full of hate"). "Hippie and the Skinhead" describes a confrontation between a gay flower child and a marauding skinhead, presented as a country-and-western nursery rhyme ("Billy was a queer, pilly, sexy hippy/He wore his gear frilly, hairy, zippy..."). The album sold briskly until the BBC banned it. RCA then pulled it from its catalog.

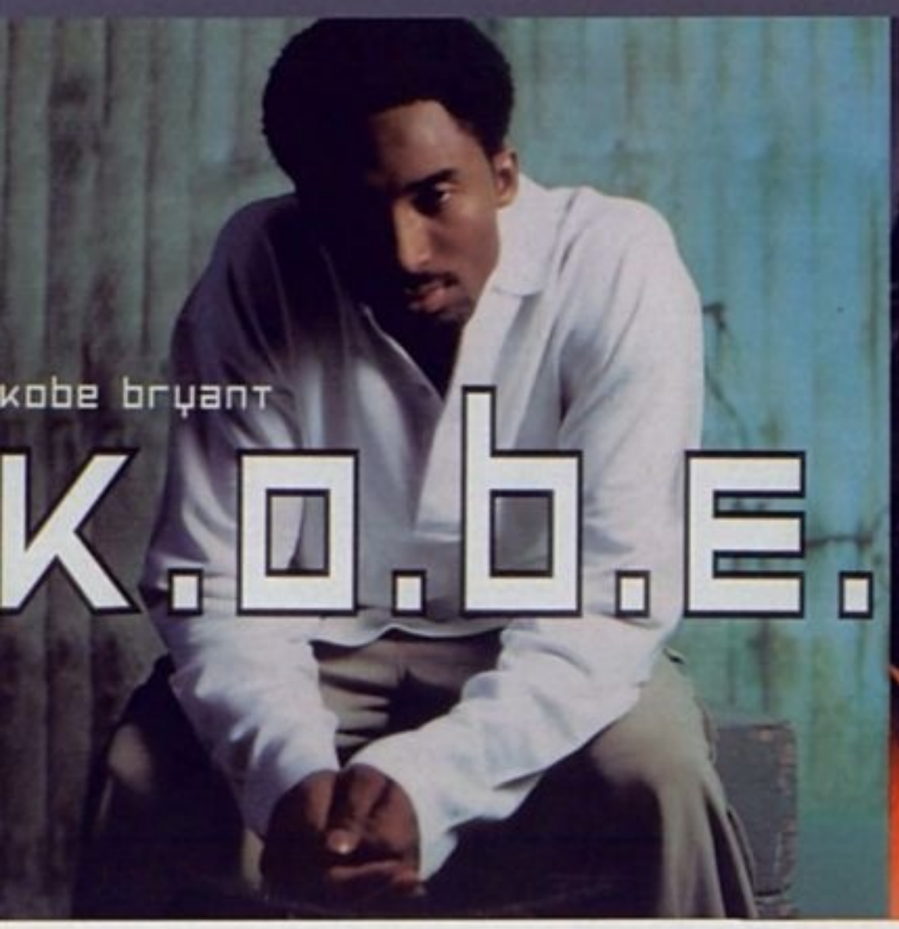
Top Three Albums From the Crew of the Starship *Enterprise*

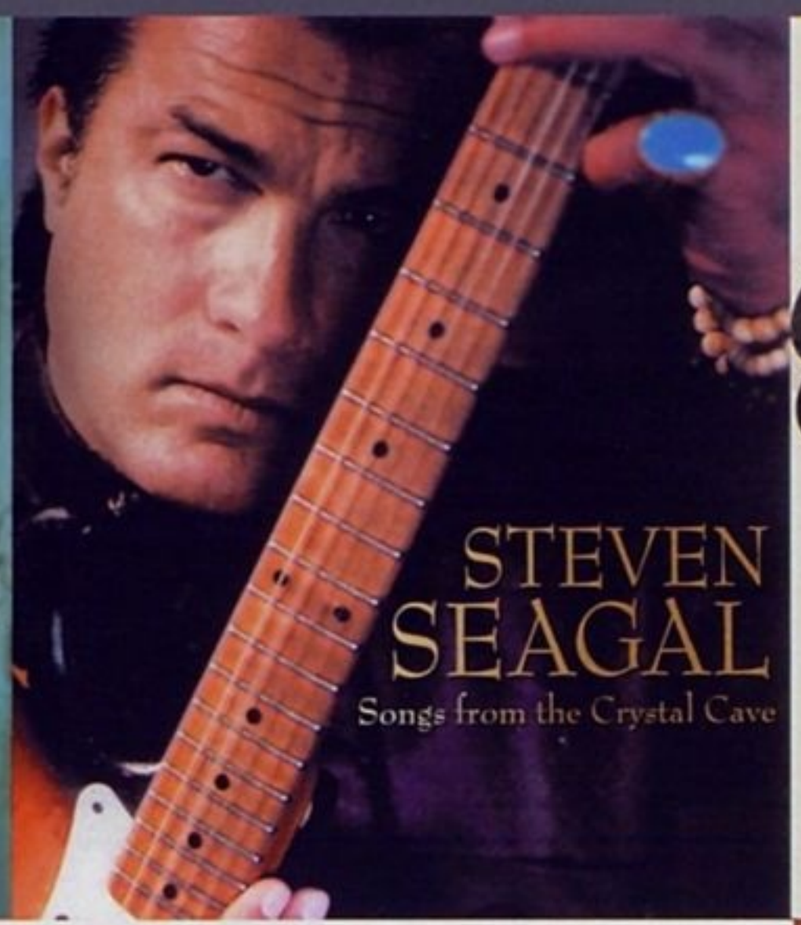
NICHELLE NICHOLS, *Down to Earth* (1968). It's the only album ever to include versions of both "The Lady Is a Tramp" and the *Star Trek* theme.

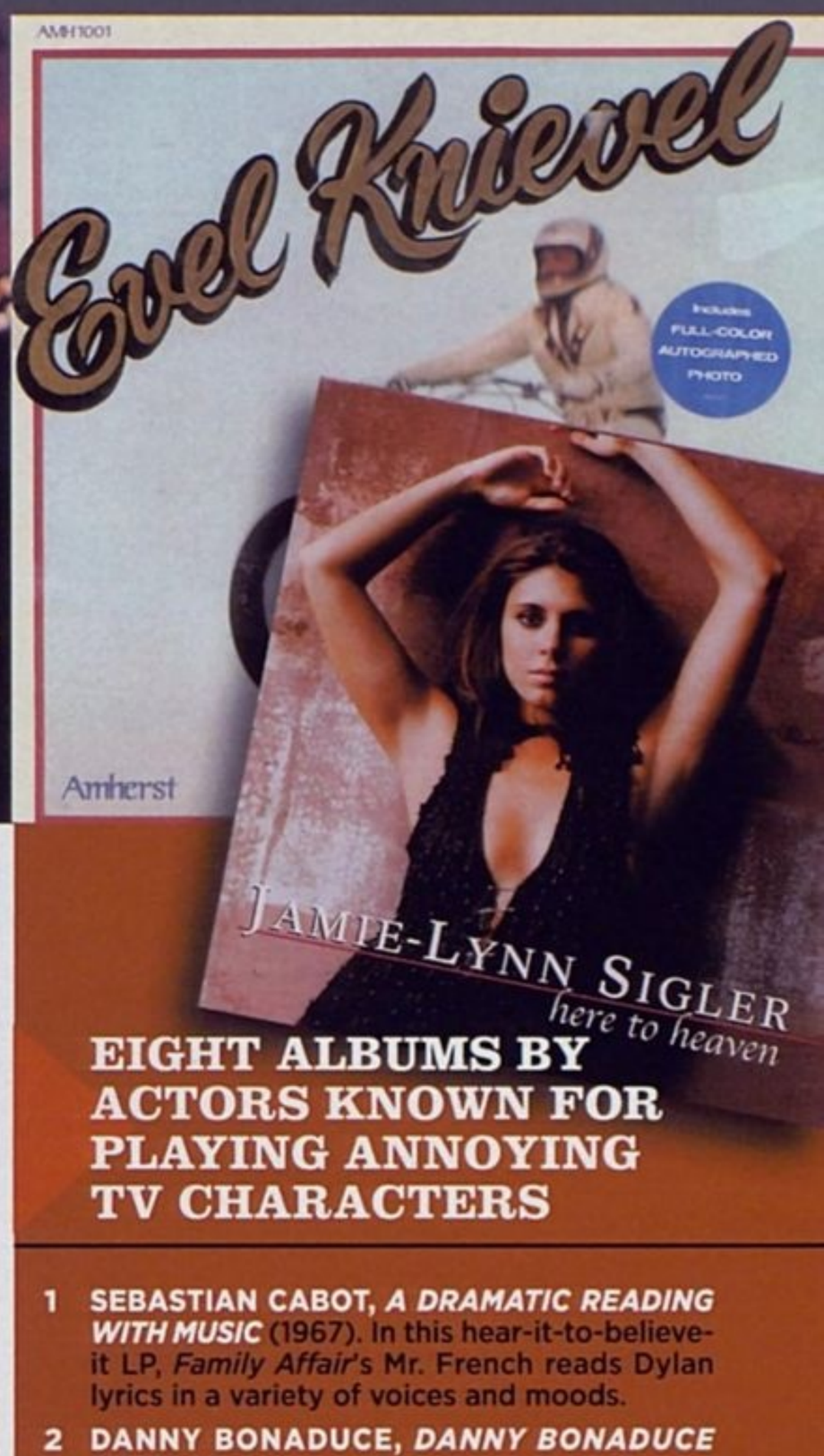
LEONARD NIMOY, *The Way I Feel* (1968). This album is as hard to turn off as the early weeks of *American Idol*. Nimoy made about a dozen LPs altogether, each in his signature flat-and-shaky style.

WILLIAM SHATNER, *The Transformed Man* (1968). Shatner doesn't win too many accolades for best actor, but he's seldom challenged for the most acting award. That's especially true of this classic, with his melodramatic incantations of Dylan and Beatles lyrics. The best track combines the depressing "Spleen" ("Hope, like a bat fluttering blindly, beats his wings against the walls and dashes his head on the rotting ceiling") with a staccato delivery of "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," in which Shatner appears to be under the influence of drugs he seems quite unfamiliar with ("*Lucy!* In!









The! Sky! *With diamooooOONDS*!!!"). Last year Shatner cut an album, *Has Been*, with Ben Folds, that no one is making fun of—yet.

Worst Jock Albums

CASSIUS CLAY, *I Am the Greatest!* (1963). The future Muhammad Ali's disc includes taunts ("I predict Mr. Liston's dismemberment/I'll hit him so hard he'll wonder where October and November went") and boasts ("This will be the best-selling album of all time!"). Sales were slower than expected.

EVEL KNIEVEL, *Evel Speaks to the Kids* (1974). After reciting his own poetry to music, Evel takes questions. When a young fan asks why one should always wear a helmet, the daredevil smacks him upside the head to demonstrate.

CARL LEWIS, *Modern Man* (1987). Lewis's musical career ended in 1993 when his voice cracked while he sang the national anthem before an NBA game. His remains the only known version of "The Star-Spangled Banner" that includes a midsong apology.

KOBE BRYANT, *Visions* (2000). On the track "Thug Poet," which features Nas and 50 Cent, Bryant cites automatic weapons, cocaine and federal agents as metaphors for his rhyming ability. The album was so bad, the record label decided not to officially release it.

Top Five Albums by U.S. Senators

JOHN KERRY AND THE ELECTRAS, *The Electras* (1961). Prior to shipping off to Vietnam, Kerry played bass in this rich-kid instrumental surf band. A copy of its lone LP sold for $2,551 on eBay.

EVERETT DIRKSEN, *Gallant Men* (1967). The "golden voice of the Senate" from Illinois won a Grammy for this collection of patriotic readings.

SAM ERVIN JR., *Senator Sam at Home* (1973). The North Carolina senator followed up his important work as chairman of the Watergate Committee with renditions of "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and "If I Had a Hammer."

ROBERT BYRD, *Mountain Fiddler* (1978). The senator from West Virginia played at campaign stops but still won.

ORRIN HATCH, *Jesus' Love Is Like a River* (1998). The Utah senator, who earns $20,000 a year in song royalties, says that anyone who illegally downloads more than three songs should have his computer destroyed.

Strangest Brews

TIMOTHY LEARY, *Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out* (1966). Leary pontificates in LSD-induced gibberish ("Our slimy protozoan fathers in moist cellular heaven, hallowed be thy tissue name...") over psychedelic music.

CHARLES MANSON, *Lie: The Love and Terror Cult* (1970). The Beach Boys recorded a song by the then unknown Manson on *20/20*, but he couldn't land a contract of his own. Some theorize that he sent the Family to kill two producers who had rejected his work but that they targeted the wrong people. Manson released *Lie* to fund his defense.

JOE PESCI, *Vincent LaGuardia Gambini Sings Just for You* (1998). As a teen Pesci recorded an LP

(concluded on page 161)

EIGHT ALBUMS BY ACTORS KNOWN FOR PLAYING ANNOYING TV CHARACTERS

1 **SEBASTIAN CABOT, *A DRAMATIC READING WITH MUSIC*** (1967). In this hear-it-to-believe-it LP, *Family Affair*'s Mr. French reads Dylan lyrics in a variety of voices and moods.

2 **DANNY BONADUCE, *DANNY BONADUCE*** (1973). He supposedly had someone sing for him. If that's true, the fake Danny isn't making a living hustling karaoke contests.

3 **DONNY MOST, *DONNY MOST*** (1976). Most (Ralph Malph on *Happy Days*) had better material when he played a satanic heavy-metal singer on a Halloween episode of *CHiPs*.

4 **JOHN TRAVOLTA, *JOHN TRAVOLTA*** (1976). Travolta's nonthespian voice is almost bubbly. His hit "Let Her In" might have inspired Michael Jackson's "She's Out of My Life."

5 **BILLY MUMY, *VOOBAHA*** (1980). You remember him as Will Robinson on *Lost in Space*. The musical world knows him as half of Barnes & Barnes, a 1980s songwriting team that produced such tunes as "I Had Sex With Pac-Man" and "Boogie Woogie Amputee."

6 **MR. T, *MR. T'S COMMANDMENTS*** (1984). This album shows that despite his coaching from Ice-T (no relation), Mr. T as a rapper is a far better actor.

7 **DAVID HASSELHOFF, *NIGHT ROCKER*** (1984). Although his debut has a vivid cover (Hasselhoff looks like a gay kung fu assassin on the hood of his robot car) and a sublime title track ("I am the night rocker/I wanna rock you all night long/I am the night rocker/I wanna love you in a song.... Let's fly away"), it has never been released in the United States.

8 **JAMIE-LYNN SIGLER, *HERE TO HEAVEN*** (2001). Meadow of *The Sopranos* is not Italian but Jewish, Cuban and Greek, which was probably your second guess.

Tender Words

JUAN ALVAREZ • JORGE G

SEX, DUDS AND ROCK AND ROLL

Fashion by **JOSEPH DE ACETIS**

Music and style go hand in hand—just look at the coolest new acts storming the stage

Photography by MICK ROCK

Produced by JENNIFER RYAN JONES

PLAYBOY FASHION

This is the most dangerous-sounding band to cross the pond in ages. Clockwise from top: Gary Powell wears a T-shirt by **DRAGONFLY CLOTHING COMPANY** ($50) and pants by **JOHN RICHMOND DENIM** ($380). Carl Barat is in a shirt ($450) and sleeveless tee ($530) by **JOHN RICHMOND DENIM,** jeans by **TRASH AND VAUDEVILLE** ($48) and a hat by **BAILEY** ($34). John Hassall is in a **JOHN RICHMOND DENIM** T-shirt ($430), jeans by **TRASH AND VAUDEVILLE** ($48) and a blazer by **DAANG GOODMAN FOR TRIPP NYC** ($58).

(THE LIBERTINES)

(SONDRE LERCHE)

Two Way Monologue (Astralwerks), the Norwegian songwriter's latest album, showcases his perfect melodies, wistful lyrics and varied arrangements. He's in pants ($480), a jacket ($1,225) and print shirt ($385), all by **JEAN PAUL GAULTIER HOMME.**

(SNOW PATROL)

Snow Patrol, based in Glasgow, is part of the thriving indie scene there, which over the years has produced the Jesus and Mary Chain, Primal Scream and Belle & Sebastian. The band's latest album, *Final Straw* (A&M), is packed with sweeping, anthemic rock reminiscent of early U2 as well as Coldplay. Back row, from left: Johnny Quinn is in a denim jacket by CHIP & PEPPER ($340) and jeans by JEAN PAUL DA'MAGE ($179). Tom Simpson wears an embroidered hoodie ($56) and a T-shirt ($24) by CAFFEINE. Nathan Connolly's in a track jacket by CHAMPION 1919 COLLECTION ($50), an embroidered T-shirt by CAFFEINE ($36) and his own DIESEL jeans. Mark McClelland wears a jacket by BUCKLER ($170). Reclining in front is vocalist—and band mastermind—Gary Lightbody, in a jacket by COLUMBIA ($60) and his own DIESEL jeans.

WOMEN'S STYLING BY MERIEM ORLET

FAT JOE

The Bronx don's new record, *Things of That Nature* (Atlantic), is a who's who of hip-hop, 2005-style. He's in a hand-painted shirt by **MISKEEN ORIGINALS** ($85), jeans by **CHROME** ($195) and Air Force 1s by **NIKE** ($180). His hat is by **NEW ERA** ($28).

The Killers tap into the dark, seedy side of Las Vegas—the band's hometown—on their brooding debut, *Hot Fuss* (Island). From left: Mark Stoermer is in a T-shirt ($20) and jeans ($48) by **TRASH AND VAUDEVILLE** (the leather jacket is his own). Frontman Brandon Flowers wears trousers ($380), a jacket ($1,700) and zip-front shirt ($300), all by **DUCKIE BROWN.** Ronnie Vannucci is in a plaid shirt by **DUCKIE BROWN** ($315) and pants by **PAUL SMITH** ($470). On David Keuning are a striped T-shirt by **DAANG GOODMAN FOR TRIPP NYC** ($24) and a pullover shirt by **DUCKIE BROWN** ($230).

(THE KILLERS)

THE RAVEONETTES

This Danish duo uses noise and attitude to pay homage to girl groups and early rock on its new LP (on Columbia). Sharin, left, is in an **A.B.S BY ALLEN SCHWARTZ** dress ($210). Sune's in a blazer by **JEAN PAUL GAULTIER** ($700) and a shirt by **ICEBERG** ($160).

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 147.

"I'd like to prove to you that the best things in life are not always free."

Centerfolds On Sex

Colleen Marie

SILENCE IS SEXY

Some women like to give men directions in bed, but I'm a little shy. I won't say, "You're doing it wrong" or "Why aren't you doing it this way?" But I will moan more if a guy is doing something I like. If he's really close to my G spot and I want him to be even closer, I'll shift my body until he's touching the right place. Sometimes you have to talk while having sex. If we're in one position and I feel like doing it differently, I'll say, "Turn me over." I'll also say, "Harder, faster." And when I'm going down on a guy or if I'm on top of him, I always like to ask, "Do you like it better this way or that way?" That way he can just nod and he doesn't have to explain the details.

MM...MASSAGE

My boyfriend and I once ordered ice cream from room service. Unfortunately, I forgot to ask for whipped cream. We tried that famous sex trick of taking a bite of ice cream and then giving your partner oral sex. But I don't usually bring food into bed—I prefer massages. There's nothing hotter than two oily people having sex. I recommend using lotion instead of massage oil, however—sometimes the oil can make you slide right off each other! I like giving massages as much as getting them. There's something sexy about sitting on top of a guy. I guess my boyfriends are pretty lucky—they get massages and I get turned on. They don't have to do anything. The only time I've given a guy a foot massage was in a bathtub. We had candles all around, and the window overlooked Las Vegas. The bathroom is a wonderful place to have sex because of the mirrors. I love watching a guy's face in the mirror while we make love.

INTERNATIO
BALLER

Kid Rock

How did this scraggly dude become rock's party master? And how does he get those women?

1

PLAYBOY: You're everywhere we look. At the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame you led the jam session with Tom Petty and Steve Winwood. Next you're at a Willie Nelson tribute, and Keith Richards, Jerry Lee Lewis and Merle Haggard are playing in your band. How'd you turn into the host with the most?
KID ROCK: I just like to jam. I like to play. It's amazing to see the people at this level who can't jam. People at the top of the charts who sell all these records and yet can't fucking jam. You'd think they would learn how to jam before attempting to become superstars—that might help music out a little bit. In this day and age when everything's so contrived, maybe people feel it if you're doing something from the heart. Or maybe I'm just fun to hang out with.

2

PLAYBOY: You became popular for a sound that merged rock and rap, but lately you've moved toward country. Does different music bring you a different audience?
KID ROCK: A couple of good ballads equals a lot more good-looking girls at the shows. I don't care how cool someone thinks it is, I do not want to be playing in front of 10,000 sweaty guys every night. I love Slipknot—I like their records—but I don't want to play for that crowd.

3

PLAYBOY: "Picture" was a major turning point in your career. It's certainly your biggest hit. Why did you have so much trouble getting it released?
KID ROCK: At first I didn't know it was one of the best songs I'd ever written, and it wasn't until later, when we recorded it, that everyone agreed it was kind of magical. Then people started overthinking it. I don't want to mention names, but one of the heads of the record company said to me, "I've been singing it to people at the radio stations, and they're not really hearing it." And I'm like, "You've got to be fucking kidding me. You're singing it? You can't sing—obviously you'd be in a different position if you could." That was just comical to me. Then I had to confront somebody and say, "I heard you said that if we release this single it'll kill my career. Is that true?" And they said yeah. I pretty much said, "Fuck you. That's wrong." And then of course the record was successful, and those same people took credit for it.

4

PLAYBOY: Were you angry?
KID ROCK: It just pisses me off. At first, when you're young, you don't care, and now it feels as if all I do is bitch about this shit. It's almost to the point that I ought to just shut my fucking mouth and go home to my fucking money and fuck all y'all [*laughs*]. Because it's not fun to sit around bitching about it. Whatever happened to talking about pussy and blow?

5

PLAYBOY: So how would you fix the record business?
KID ROCK: Sign talented people. People with some scars and some cuts and some feel, bands that have been out touring, playing music. Don't go fish some fucking kid out of a mall for some goddamned *American Idol* bullshit show. I mean, that's a great comedy sketch, but put one of these fucking American idols next to me on a fucking stage and let's see who ends up the idol. It's sad, too, because these kids are just trying to make some money, and God bless 'em, they should be able to, but look what it's done to music. It's turned it into garbage. So I'd start by signing talented people. I think that's where it's going, too—you see it coming around.

6

PLAYBOY: Record companies are in a frenzy over downloading and piracy. Are you worried?
KID ROCK: It's going to happen. We're not going to stop it. It's like anything else—someone will capitalize and make a mint off it, and then we'll all get jacked around, walls will be set up, and eventually it'll work itself out. Right now who knows who's doing it right and who's doing it wrong? When it first started happening the record companies came to me and said, "We need you to stand up against this bootlegging and piracy and shit. All the other artists are." But after doing research on it and talking to people with some brains—because I'm not the most knowledgeable person on this—I said, "Wait a second." The record companies have been ripping off the artists for years. Now somebody's ripping off the record companies, and they want the artists to stand up for them. So I was like, "Fuck you! I'm happy they're ripping you off." It's kind of funny. I'm getting ripped off either way.

7

PLAYBOY: Will albums last?
KID ROCK: It's turning into a singles market. I love how they do those awards shows, like [*in an announcer's voice*], "And now, with 10 number one singles...." Man, you look back 20 years at all the number one hits from the old *Billboard*s and you don't know any of them—they're all garbage! It's just because radio is such a political, bullshit world. But I think a great album is where the true heart of the thing lies. I don't want to have my shit turn into singles. I don't mind you downloading my shit—download the album, fine. But just cherry-picking songs, fuck that.

8

PLAYBOY: How does the country world stack up to the hip-hop world?

Interview by Alan Light

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NGUYEN PHUONG THAO

KID ROCK: If you're blind, they're identical. They're two communities that aren't mainstream but influence the mainstream heavily, and they both talk about their communities and what's going on with their heritage and culture. Each side has a tight-knit group of people who guest on each other's records and tours. It's funny to see it all start to mesh, too. Proof, from Eminem's group D12, just said to me, "God, my favorite song is 'It's Five O'Clock Somewhere,'" by Alan Jackson and Jimmy Buffett. That's just one example, but you hear it all the time.

It's totally going to happen. As white hip-hop kids get back in touch with their roots—and, I guess you could say, with their whiteness—it's inevitable. It will help a lot in race relations, too. To have someone who is white and someone who is black and have them be exactly who they want to be, do whatever they want and be able to get along—I mean, that's pretty much the key. It's not going to end racism, but it'll be a positive thing.

9

PLAYBOY: You went to Iraq and played for the troops. What was that like?

KID ROCK: It was all great, very rewarding, one of the best experiences of my life. Flying into Baghdad International Airport and walking through this crowd of 5,000 people and everyone's just screaming—it's the biggest accolade you can get, a bigger scream than we could ever hear in the largest arena in the United States. Think of when you're watching a movie and someone's acting like he's starving. You can't really appreciate it 'cause you're sitting there with a big fucking popcorn and a Coke in your hand. You just can't appreciate it enough until you go there and see how young these kids are and how hot and shitty it is, with sand and garbage blowing all over. It's the worst possible fucking place you could be on the face of the earth. Why can't we have a war in Tahiti?

10

PLAYBOY: What are your feelings about the war at this point?

KID ROCK: I won't necessarily always agree with the president, but I'll support him and stand by him. To be honest, I'm not educated enough to speak about it, and I don't think any of these other motherfuckers are, either. I'm pretty sure Janeane Garofalo's and that chick from the Dixie Chicks' educations don't stretch that far. Look up Condi Rice's or George Bush's education, where they went to school. They've been doing this shit their whole fucking lives, while we've been out dicking around with guitars, entertaining people. Fuckers in Hollywood who want to use the camera to be like, "Guess who I'm fuckin' now?" and "Oh, stop the war!"—all that shit just makes me sick. It really makes my stomach turn.

11

PLAYBOY: Ashlee Simpson got caught lip-synching on *Saturday Night Live*. And last year you complained about the Super Bowl halftime show, not because of Janet Jackson's wardrobe malfunction but because no one sang live.

KID ROCK: I don't give a shit if my kid sees Janet Jackson's boob. Big deal. What I do give a shit about is if someone—and I don't know if this is true—was trying to use that as a publicity scam. Then you can go fuck yourself. How about this: Next time leave your tape machine at home and sing live, because then you wouldn't have the time to sit around and conjure up plans to pull off your shirt. At halftime I was the only one singing live, and I'm proud to say it. I'm not putting anybody else down, but I'm proud that I always sing live. I'm not the greatest singer in the world, but I ain't scared. The attraction of live performance has come down to shock value: "Is someone going to pull his dick out? We better pay attention."

My experience in the hood is that those kids were a lot more educated in a lot of ways than we were. You didn't have to preach to those kids about not doing drugs.

12

PLAYBOY: Back in the early 1990s you were struggling, doing things like playing eighth on a bill of nine on a rap tour. How do you look back on those years?

KID ROCK: It goes back to what I was saying earlier about having some scars and some feel, finding out what works and what doesn't. It's just experience, like with anything else. I don't want some fucking 18-year-old kid to paint my house. I want the guy who's been doing it for a while, who really knows what he's doing, who's a professional. Sometimes it does get to be routine—same setup, same bus. I mean, I love it to death, but it's the show that keeps us going, switching it up every night. But back then it was different *every* night. Maybe we would get a hotel room and wouldn't have to sleep on top of the van that night. Maybe we could have people help us load our shit in today. Ah, that made it awesome back then.

13

PLAYBOY: Was there a low point?

KID ROCK: Probably years ago, before my kid was born, being in New York for a year and making the *Polyfuze Method* album, living like a rat, on dope and crack. That was pretty low—but even so, it wasn't that low. I still made my albums, did my shit, kept moving forward. It wasn't some fucking sad story in my life. It was a coming-of-age experience.

14

PLAYBOY: Fame and money can come quickly. Are you surprised that more rappers and rockers don't get into more trouble?

KID ROCK: It's weird. My experience in the hood is that those kids were a lot more educated in a lot of ways than we were as kids in the suburbs. You didn't have to preach to those kids about not doing drugs, about what the value of a dollar meant. Then all of a sudden somebody gets all that money and loses his fucking mind. Everybody hears all the stories, from *Behind the Music* on down. If you've got half a fucking brain cell left you can look at this shit and go, "Oh, all right, I should look out for that slip." At least invent a new way to fuck up. That would be okay. Spend $50 million to try to go to the moon or something. That would have been a good one if that kid—whatever the kid's name is from 'N Sync [Lance Bass]—succeeded at it. Spend all his fucking money and then get shafted—at least that *Behind the Music* story would be original.

15

PLAYBOY: Whom do you look at and say, "That's the career I want to have"?

KID ROCK: Bob Seger has been a role model for me. He's been around so long and has made such great music. He's paid his dues really hard, he's proud to be where he's from, he's a great family man, and he walked away from all this with his dignity, without looking like an idiot, without bitching and moaning about how hard he worked. It's great to see somebody walk away from this with his dignity, because so many people don't, and they turn into jokes. Or I could just be like Willie Nelson and hang out and

(concluded on page 142)

"Just remember, Wilbert, it's not over until the fat lady moans."

DEBBIE DOES PLAYBOY

No longer a teen idol, Deborah Gibson enjoys a new feeling of freedom

By David Hochman

Deborah Gibson cares about you. She wants to know if your cappuccino is foamy enough and if the heat lamp outside Buzz Coffee, a favorite place of hers on the Sunset Strip, is keeping you toasty. To make you smile she will peel off her stretchy blue sweater just to show you the even stretchier baby tee—the one with Thumper the rabbit on it—underneath. And when there's a break in the conversation, the girl will close her eyes, take a breath and sing to you. Sweetly, teasingly, almost in a whisper.

"I'm wild and free," the song goes. "I'm nothing but me." It's her latest single, called "Naked." And it's definitely keeping you toasty.

You may remember her as Debbie, the young Long Islander who sold 16 million albums, beginning in 1987 with *Out of the Blue*, but Deborah is the one you won't forget. At the age of 34

"There's not a joke about myself I haven't heard," Gibson says. "But I'm like, 'Okay, whatever, bring it on.'"

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GUIDO ARGENTINI

she is graceful where she was once gangly, and she has traded the sweet-16 routine—Debbie often gave interviews alongside her teddy bear collection and pooh-poohed sex before marriage—for grown-up glam.

"I'm not that girl anymore," she says. Gone are the bowler hats, the oversize blazers and the high-tops. She has filled out in all the right places and is more than game to talk about sex, drugs and rock and roll. "I feel like I'm breaking all the rules," she says.

Which is funny, because the rules defined Gibson. By not smoking or swearing or wearing torpedo brassieres, she established herself as the un-Madonna, a sort of Top 40 hall monitor. Pure and chaste, Gibson sang sunny songs of love and odes to electric youth. Gibson's goodness showed us precisely what was bad, yet it also made us wonder what she was hiding—or at least what was under her buttoned-up oxfords. A little girl, it turns out.

The truth is, Gibson wasn't as late to the ball as she'd like us to believe. In the early 1990s, around the time she and archrival Tiffany were discovering how fickle mall jammers can be, Gibson suddenly got the double meaning of her top 10 hit "Shake Your Love."

"I was 19 when I first had sex," she says. She looks at you directly when she says this, the way she might once have talked to you about algebra class. "It was so new and overwhelming, but the guy was great. I'm glad I grew up with the no-premarital-sex idea in my head, because it forced me not to grow up before I was ready. But once I discovered sex there was no turning back."

•

There was a time when practically every suburban girl knew the lyrics to "Only in My *(text concluded on page 147)*

Gibson says she was 19 when she first became intimate with a man. "But once I discovered sex, there was no looking back."

"I'm really comfortable
with my body.
I'm probably the only
34-year-old in L.A. who
hasn't had a Botox shot."

See more of Deborah Gibson's pictorial at cyber.playboy.com.

"I've never felt more powerful than
when I was standing in front of an audience
with nothing but feathers covering my breasts."

Amazing GRACE

(continued from page 104)

underneath." She bites her lip as she mentions this detail, as if she's wondering whether she's being indiscreet. The look deepens when we ask if this playfulness translates to her real love life. Then she laughs. "It's like that song that goes, 'They want a lady in the street but a freak in bed,'" she says. "I think that plays true for everyone."

Although Jillian is considering moving to a city for a few months, she isn't likely to surrender her small-town charm. Miss March is, after all, a girl whose enthusiasm for her new Honda Del Sol ("I don't know anything about cars, but they're so cute!") is eclipsed only by her fondness for yodeling. "It started out as a joke, but I started enjoying it," she says with a laugh. "I'm on lesson five, but the sound gets too high-pitched for my speakers, so I'm kind of stuck at that stage." As she tilts back her head and starts to yodel, it becomes clear that someone with such lungs would never let success go to her head. "I'm feeling pretty grounded," she says. "I'm a Midwest girl, that's for sure."

A Chat With Jillian's Mom

Jillian's mother, Katharine Walter, helped her daughter become a Playmate. We talked to her about supporting Jillian's ambitions.

PLAYBOY: Why did you write to Howard Stern?

KATHARINE: Jillian had wanted to be in PLAYBOY since she was 12 years old. Last year she even wrote a school paper about it. Because she's a Howard Stern fan, I sent the paper and her picture to him. I didn't think anything would come of it.

PLAYBOY: Did you encourage her to pursue other careers?

KATHARINE: Sure, but it would always come back to PLAYBOY. I didn't want to be a hypocrite. I gave up accounting to make glass dollhouses that take a year to build, so I'm not one to preach about nine-to-five jobs. I finally said, "If that's what you want, I'll support your decision."

PLAYBOY: Were you apprehensive about being on *The Howard Stern Show*?

KATHARINE: The first time I watched it, they were evaluating a girl and throwing cupcakes at her tush. I was petrified that they were going to be horrible to Jillian. That changed after I met Howard. He's very funny, but he has his morals in check. I used to listen to classical music every day, but now I listen to Howard.

PLAYBOY: Did you offer Jillian advice before she came to L.A. to shoot this pictorial?

KATHARINE: Only about 25 pages of it! Basically I said, "If you don't want to do something, don't." We live in a small town full of conservative Republicans and farmers. People have asked me if I'm worried. I've said, "She's going to a gated mansion where they have security guards. She's probably safer there than anywhere I could send her." That's comforting to me.

Dirty Duck® by Bobby London

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www.playboy.com

Kid Rock (continued from page 130)

Just be cool and be yourself, be funny, be nice to people. How's that for a concept? Just be nice.

smoke weed and have fun. That sounds nice. I could go either way, man.

16

PLAYBOY: What have you learned from hanging out with Nelson and Jerry Lee Lewis and those guys?

KID ROCK: Actually, I'm going to Memphis to record with Jerry Lee, to get some piano lessons. You can't learn that anywhere. I don't think enough of that is being passed down from these great players. I know I wouldn't have learned anywhere else the shit Hank Jr. has shown me on guitar. "Oh no, you tune it down like this. Let me show you that Allman Brothers chord here. Oh, if you want to play with that bottle, you gotta go like this." They'll show you the real way, a lesson you can't get at Guitar Center. That's the most valuable shit you can learn. I have no problem saying I'm not the best player. I'll get there one day, but as cocky and outspoken as I am, I'm humble enough to know when someone's better, and I know how to shut the fuck up and listen. I'm pretty good at that.

17

PLAYBOY: You're very close to your young son. Does he go on the road with you?

KID ROCK: He came out last weekend. He's 11, and the older he gets, the more fun it gets. We just do fun shit, like when me and him and Uncle Kracker bought the same outfits—blue sports coats, Nike Air Force 1s and little derby hats and shit to go pimping in. He understands what his dad is. He knows we're going to be drinking, having a good time, and he sees things in a certain light and knows no harm's being done—something people from the outside looking in might not understand. But I know he understands. He's my son. He isn't starstruck, just does not give a shit at all. He's been around it and the people who come through the house enough. Maybe if the star of *Yu-Gi-Oh!* showed up he'd be impressed, but other than that he just doesn't care.

18

PLAYBOY: Some of your girlfriends—Pam Anderson, Jaime Pressly—have had a certain visibility in this magazine. Is it at all strange knowing that millions of guys checked out your girlfriend naked?

KID ROCK: Not at all. I think, if anything, it's great, as a matter of fact, because it lets you know who's the man [*laughs*]. Oh my God, don't print it like that. Make sure there's quote marks around that and it says I'm laughing—"The singer goes, 'Ha-ha.'" I would come off so bad if you print it like that. I am just joking.

19

PLAYBOY: We'll take care of you. You're a pretty scraggly dude—how do you wind up with women like that? What's your advice?

KID ROCK: I don't even know. I'm just not a dick. As much as I might sound like one on my records, I'm just not a dick. Just be cool and be yourself, be funny, be nice to people. How about that for a concept? Just be nice. You can do whatever the fuck you want if you're nice. "Can I put it in your ass—please?" [*laughs*]

20

PLAYBOY: You've had Pam Anderson as a girlfriend, been a character on *The Simpsons,* sung at the Super Bowl. What's left to accomplish?

KID ROCK: Die young, leave a good-looking corpse, right? I don't know. It would have been nice to have a big family—I always kind of wanted that—but I guess with what I do, God's not going to afford me that. But I really can't complain about what he has afforded me, so it's like anything else—you can't have it all. I don't know if I'm really into having a 15-year-old kid and having babies running around again. I've often thought about adopting some older kids. We'll see what happens.

I'm either going to find a wife or I'm going to get some servants. But I don't want them for the same reason [*laughs*]—it's not that I want a wife to be a servant. With a wife, I could have somebody around who could really enjoy everything I have, who I could just share it all with. But other than that I'd want servants so I could have all my friends over all the time, and then the servants could just clean everything up.

142 *"Why, yes…I have my father's features and my mother's fixtures…."*

PUNCHDRUNK *(continued from page 88)*

Women, the drunker they get, the more they love to slug a drag queen, knowing it's a man.

That wailing *Titanic* song, it almost fucking killed Flint. That and the guys wearing big honking finger rings. After that we had a rule about no rings. That, and we'd check to see you weren't palming a roll of dimes or a lead fishing weight to make your fist do more damage.

Of all the folks, the women are the worst. Some of them ain't happy unless they see teeth fly out the other side of your mouth. Women, the drunker they get, the more they love, love, love to slug a drag queen, knowing it's a man. Especially if he's dressed and looking better than they are. Slapping was fine too, but no scratching.

Right quick, the market opened up. Webber and Flint, they started skipping dinner, drinking light beer. Any new town, you'd catch one of them standing sideways in front of a mirror, looking at his stomach, his shoulders pulled back and his butt stuck out.

Every town, you'd swear they each had another damn suitcase. This suitcase for dressy dresses, evening dresses. Then garment bags so's they wouldn't wrinkle as much. Bags for shoes and wig boxes. A big new makeup case for each of them.

It got so their getups were cutting into the bottom line. But say a word about it and Flint would tell you, "You got to spend it to make it." That's not even adding up what they spent for music. Hit or miss, they found that most people want to slug you if you play the following record albums: *Color Me Barbra, Stoney End, The Way We Were, Thighs and Whispers, Broken Blossom* and *Beaches*. Really, especially *Beaches*.

You could put Mahatma Gandhi into a convent, cut off his nuts and shoot him full of Demerol, and he'd still take a shot at your face if you played him that "Wind Beneath My Wings" song. Least that was Webber's experience.

None of this is what the military trained them for. But coming home, you don't find any want ads for munitions experts, targeting specialists, missions point men. Coming home, they didn't find much of any kind of job. Nothing that paid near what Flint was getting, his legs peeking through the slit down the side of a green satin evening gown, his toes webbed with nylon stockings and poking out the front of gold sandals. Flint stopping just long enough between songs and slugs to put more foundation over his bruises, his cigarette ringed with red from his lips. His lipstick and blood.

County fairs were good business, but motorcycle runs came in a close second. Rodeos were good too. So were boat shows. Or the parking lots outside those big gun-and-knife conventions. No, they never had to look too far for a good-paying crowd.

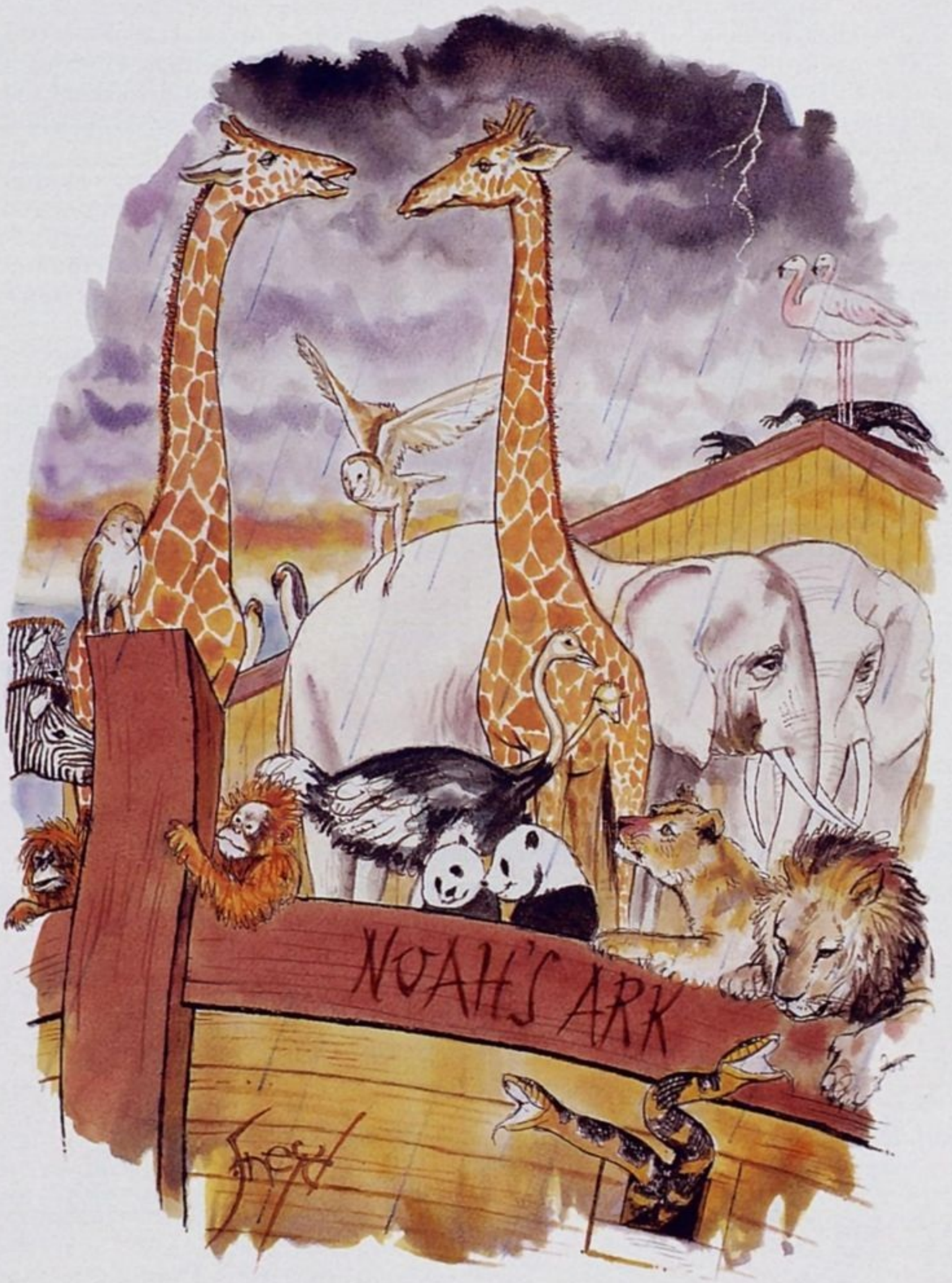
Driving back to the motel one night, after Webber and Flint had left most of their makeup smeared on the blacktop outside the Western States Guns and Ammo Expo, Webber pulls the rearview mirror around to where he's riding shotgun. Webber rolls his face around to see it in the mirror at every angle and says, "I can't be up to this much longer."

Webber, he looks fine. Besides, how he looks don't matter. The song matters more. The wig and lipstick.

"I was never what you'd call pretty," Webber says, "but least I always kept myself looking...nice."

Flint is driving, looking at the chipped red paint on his fingernails, holding the steering wheel. Nibbling down a torn nail with his chipped teeth, Flint says, "I was thinking about using a stage name." Still looking at his fingernails, he says, "What do you think of the name Pepper Bacon?"

About by now, Flint's girl, she was off in flight school. That's just as well. Things was sliding downhill. For instance, just before they got set up and ready in the parking lot outside the Mountain States



"I don't know, but judging from all the couples on board, I think it's some kind of sex cruise."

Gem and Mineral Show, Webber looks at Flint and says, "Your goddamn boobs are too big...."

Flint's wearing a halter kind of long dress, with straps that tie behind his neck to keep the front up. And yeah, his boobs look big, but Flint says it's the new dress. And Webber says, "No, it ain't. Your boobs been growing for the past four states."

"All your carping," Flint says, "it's just 'cause they're bigger than yours."

And Webber says, real quiet out the corner of his lipstick mouth, he says, "Former staff sergeant Flint Stedman, you're turning into a sloppy goddamn cow...."

Then it's sequins and wig hair flying every which way. That night they raked in a total of zero cash. Nobody wants to slug a mess like that, already all scratched up and bleeding. Eyes all bloodshot and mascara all smeared from crying. Looking back, that little catfight damn near scuttled their mission.

The reason this country can't win a war is that we're all the time fighting each other instead of the enemy. Same as with the Congress not letting the military do its job. Nothing ever gets settled that way. Webber and Flint, they ain't bad people, just typical of what we're trying to rise above. Their whole mission is to settle this terrorism situation, settle it for good. And doing that takes money. To keep Flint's girl in school. To get their hands on a jet. Get the drugs they'll need to knock out the regular lease-company pilot. That all takes solid cash money.

The truth be told, Flint's tits were getting a little on the scary side.

Flying here, reclining on white leather at 51,000 feet, they're headed south along the Red Sea, all the way to Jedda, where they'll hang a left. The other guys in the air right now, all of them headed for their own assigned targets, you have to wonder how they made their money, what pain and torture they went through.

You can still see where Webber got his ears pierced and how pulled down and stretched out they still look from those dangle earrings.

Looking back, most of the wars in history were over somebody's religion.

This is just the attack to end all wars. Or at least most of them.

After Flint got control of his tits, they toured from college to college, anywhere people drank beer with nothing to do. By then Flint had a detached retina floating around, making him blind in that eye. Webber had a 60 percent hearing loss from his brain getting bounced around. Traumatic brain lesions, the emergency room called it. They were both of them a little shaky, needing both hands to hold a mascara wand steady, both of them too stiff to work the zipper up the back of his own dress. Wobbly even on their medium heels. Still, they went on.

When it came time, when the jet fighters from the United Arab Emirates would come to shadow them, Flint might be too blind to fly, but he'd be in the cockpit with everything he'd learned in the Air Force.

Here, in the white leather cabin of their Gulfstream G550, Flint has kicked off both his boots, and his bare feet show toenails still painted titty pink. You can still smell a hint of Chanel No. 5 perfume mixed with his BO.

One of their last shows, in Missoula, Montana, a girl steps out of the crowd to tell them they're hateful bigots, that they're encouraging violent hate crimes being acted out against the gender-conflicted members of our otherwise peaceful pluralistic society.

Webber standing there, cut off in the middle of singing "Buttons and Bows," the spiffy Doris Day version, not the cheesy Dinah Shore version, he's wearing a strapless blue satin sheath with all his chest hair, his shoulder and arm hair billowing from wrist to wrist like a lush boa of black feathers, and he asks this girl, "So you wanna buy a punch or not?"

Flint's one step away, at the head of the line, taking people's money, and he says, "Take your best shot." He says, "Half price for chicks."

And the girl, she just looks at them, tapping one of her feet in its tennis shoe, her mouth clamped shut and pulled way over to one side of her face.

Finally she says, "Can you fake-sing that *Titanic* song?" And Flint takes her 10 bucks and gives her a hug. "For you," he says, "we can play that song all night long...."

That was the night they finally topped 50 grand for the mission.

Now, outside the jet, you can see the torn brown-and-gold coastline of Saudi Arabia. The windows of a Gulfstream are two, three times the size of the little portholes you get on a commercial jetliner. Just looking out at the sun and ocean, everything else mixed together from this high up, you'd almost want to live, to scrub the whole mission and head home no matter how bleak the future.

A Gulfstream carries enough fuel to fly 6,750 nautical miles, even with an 85 percent headwind. Their target was going to take only 6,701, leaving just enough jet fuel to trigger their luggage, their suitcases and the many bags that Jenson had loaded in Florida, where they landed because the pilot started to feel sick. This was after they got him a cup of coffee. Three Vicodins ground and mixed in black coffee would make most people dizzy, groggy, sick. So they landed. Offloaded the regular pilot, on-loaded the bags. Mr. Jenson humping the ammonium nitrate. And here was Flint's girl, Sheila, fresh out of flight school and ready to take off.

In the open doorway to the cockpit you can see Sheila slip her earphones down to rest around her neck. Looking back over one shoulder, she says, "Just heard on the radio. Somebody dove a jet full of fertilizer into the Vatican...."

"Go figure," Webber says.

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ZING
SHAKE
WIGGLE
FOR THIS I'M NOT EVEN GOING TO BOTHER TO FAKE AN ORGASM.
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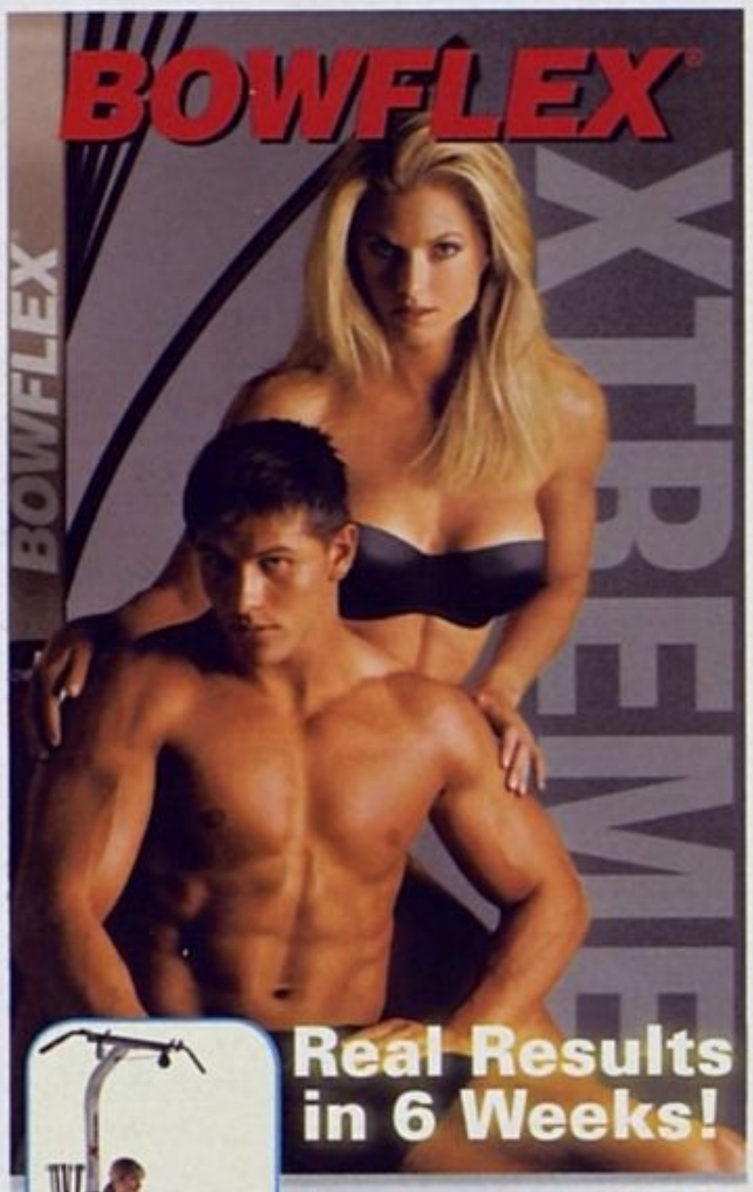

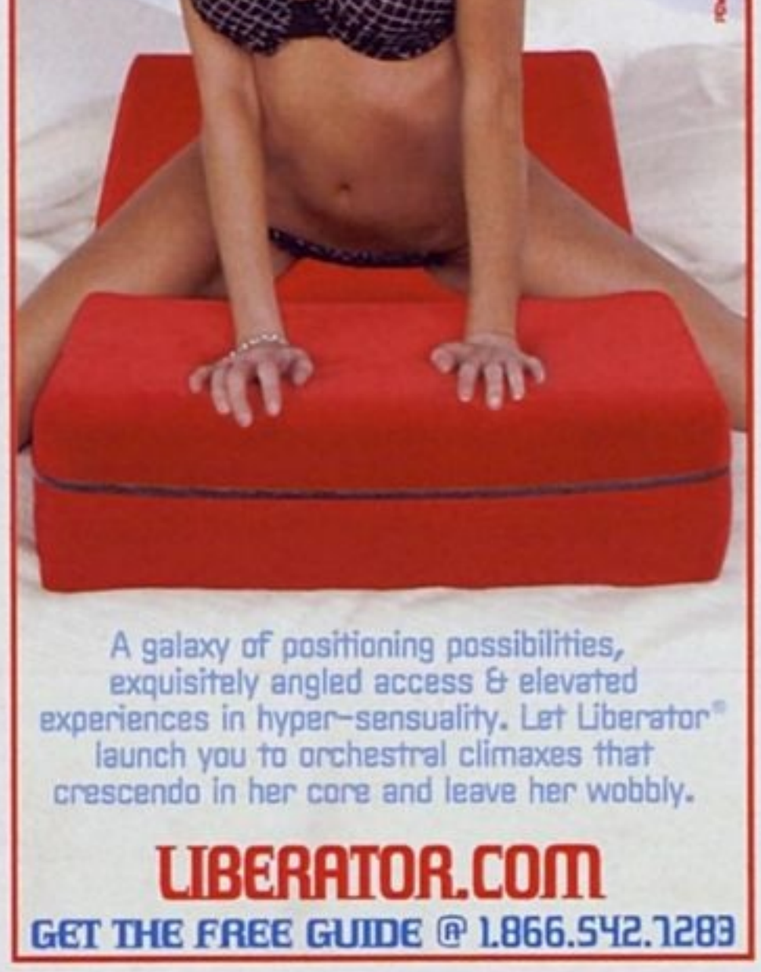
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Looking out his window, kicked back in his white leather recliner, Flint says, "We got company." Off that side of the plane, you can see two jet fighters. Flint gives them a little wave. The profile of each little fighter pilot, they don't wave back. And Webber looks at the ice melting in his empty glass and says, "Where are we going?"

From the cockpit, Sheila says, "We've had them since we made the turn inland at Jedda." She puts her headphones back over her ears. And Flint leans across the aisle to pour the empty glass full of scotch, again, and Flint says, "Does Mecca ring a bell, old buddy? The al-Haram? How about the Ka'ba?"

Sheila, one hand touching the earphone over one ear, she says, "They got the Mormon Tabernacle, the National Baptist Convention headquarters, the Wailing Wall and the Dome of the Rock, the Beverly Hills Hotel...."

Nope, Flint says. Disarmament didn't work. The United Nations didn't either. Still, maybe this will. With their friend Jenson, our Reverend Godless, to be the sole survivor.

Webber left that girl from Missoula everything he had, including the Mustang, his set of Craftsman tools and 14 Coach purses with the shoes and outfits to match.

Webber says, "What's in the Beverly Hills Hotel?" And Flint drains his glass and says, "The Dalai Lama...."

That girl in Missoula, Montana, Webber got her name and phone number that night. When it came time for them all to write out their last will and testaments, Webber left that girl everything he had in the world, including the Mustang parked in his folks' breezeway, his set of Craftsman tools and 14 Coach purses with the shoes and outfits to match.

That night, after she'd paid 50 bucks to kick Webber's ass, the college girl looks at him with his blind white eye swollen almost shut, his lips split. He's three years older than her, but he looks like her grandma, and she says, "So why is it you're doing this?"

And Webber peels off the wig, all the strands and curls of blonde hair stuck to the blood dried around his nose and mouth. Webber says, "Everybody wants to make the world a better place."

Drinking his light beer, Flint looks at Webber. Shaking his head, he says, 'You fucker...." Flint says, "Is that my wig?"

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RABAN

(continued from page 54)

Peninsula. So once again, as the secessionists saw it, the city drubbed the countryside with its imperious rule.

The rage is all the greater because the countryside knows in its heart that it is right. America's sustaining myths are rural ones: Virtue resides in the soil, in the little house on the prairie, the lonely clapboard church, the one-room school, the small self-governing Puritan township. American writers from James Fenimore Cooper and Henry Thoreau to Gary Snyder and Barry Lopez have expended much eloquence on the theme that true wisdom is to be found in the woods, not in the arid intellectualism (read "best available science") of the city. Like Britain (and unlike France or Italy), the U.S., despite producing at least two of the great cities of the world, is prone to see the city as William Cobbett saw London, as a "great wen," a pustular, abnormal swelling on the fair face of the countryside. The modern suburban dream of rus in urbe reflects that feeling: To live in Issaquah, a suburban town 17 miles east of Seattle, on the edge of the Tiger Mountain State Forest, is to conjoin oneself to the good countryside and escape the bad city. So it's hardly surprising that when the suburbs have to choose a side in the war at election time, they declare themselves for the country and the mystical values that come with being close to the smell of the woods and the footprints of the mountain lion. Suburbanites love to think their God's little acre of tract housing is almost, if not quite, a farm (one of the most hallowed words in American mythology), and if farmers' property rights are threatened by the city, they'll go with the farmers every time.

Faced by this rebellion, the city has been quick to turn with venom on the countryside. I have heard Seattleites describe driving the few hundred miles to Spokane or Boise, Idaho as if they had traveled through Romania under the Ceausescu dictatorship. They extol the grandeur of the environment along the route, even as they deplore the meanness of the people they saw there: their massed ranks of belligerent American flags, their forests of Bush-Cheney signs, their unspeakable restaurants, the scarifying messages on the signboards of their fundamentalist churches. From behind the steering wheel, they've seen bigots, creationists, rabid prolifers, environmental vandals—unwashed, illiberal America, red in tooth, claw, religion and politics. "East of the mountains," as Seattle likes to say, meaning the Cascade Range, lies a benighted foreign country, the Jesusland that stole the 2004 election.

I've been guilty of this myself. Driving one night through eastern Washington long ago, I happened to pick up an AM station on which a deep-voiced preacher was performing phone-in exorcisms, bringing sobbing women to what sounded like orgasm as he wrestled evil spirits from their innermost beings. For a while this show so colored my view of "east of the mountains" that I readily fell in with the received urban wisdom that the eastern half of the state is populated by far-right religious lunatics.

Not true at all. The American Religion Data Archive (thearda.com), maintained by the sociology department at Penn State University, maps the U.S., county by county, by religious affiliation and church membership. In many counties in Alabama and Arkansas you can see the overwhelming preponderance of "evangelical Protestant" over all other categories, including "unclaimed"—the category that includes unbelievers like me, along, I imagine, with people whose beliefs are so eccentric they defy categorization altogether. It turns out that ungodly Seattle and King County have a lower proportion of unclaimeds (62.7 percent) than rural counties east of the mountains such as Stevens (72.7 percent) or Pend Oreille (76.6 percent). As the figure for Spokane County (63.9 percent) confirms, people in cities are more likely to go to church than people in the countryside in generally irreligious Washington.

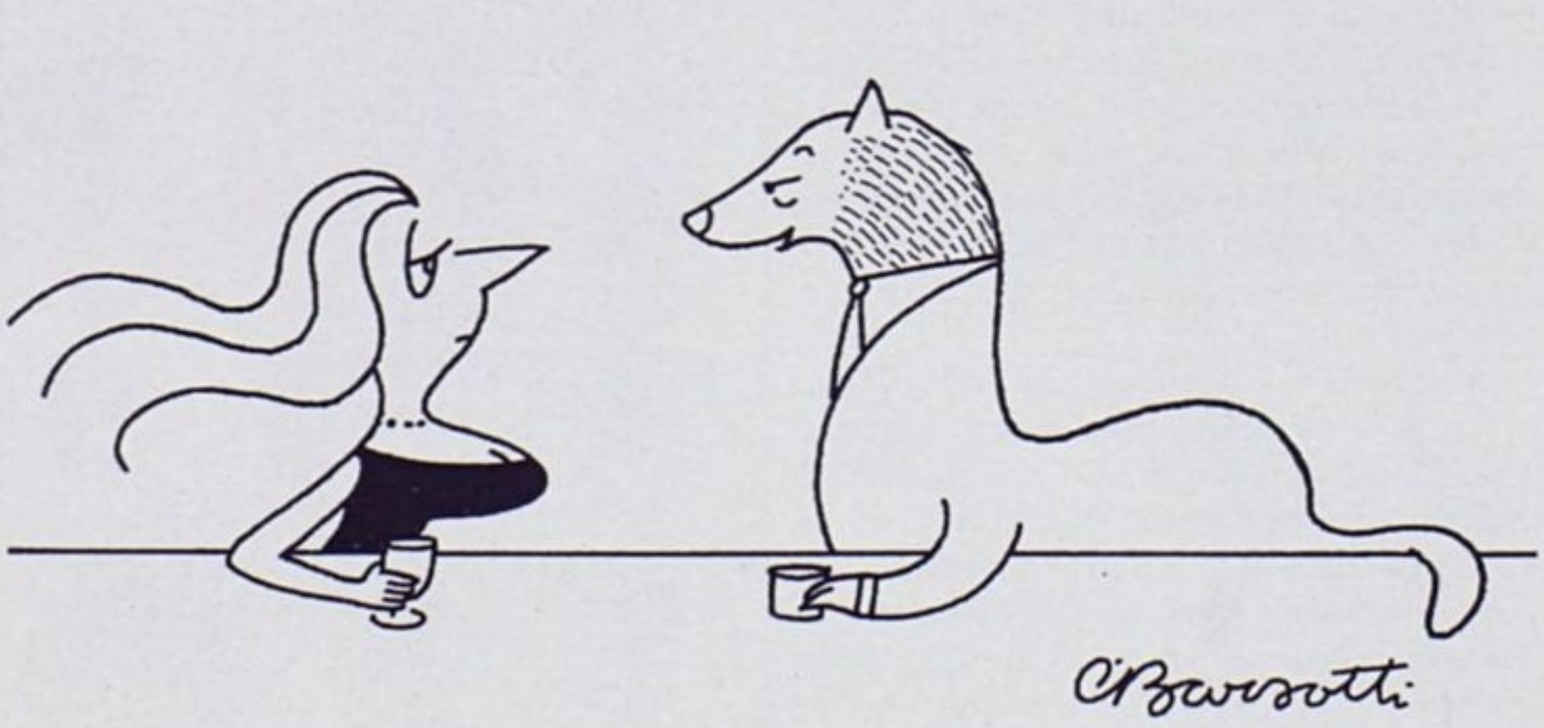
Yet it's true that the rural east does vote in step with the Christian right—not because it's full of born-againers but because, perhaps, there is a natural coincidence of interest between country dwellers and evangelicals. The fundamentalists are skeptical of science; so, for its own reasons, is the countryside. Fundamentalist theology, with its elevation of personal responsibility (to your god, for your own soul and your own property) above the merely communal, chimes nicely with the country's view of things. American Protestantism and American individualism have been twinned since the Puritans set up the Massachusetts Bay colony, but in recent years the city, with its loathed science and loathed bureaucracy, has come to be perceived, in the suburbs hardly less than in the countryside, as the enemy of individualism—not for philosophical or religious reasons but because of "setbacks" and "critical areas."

Liberals blamed the result of the last election on culture wars of the kind described brilliantly by Thomas Frank in *What's the Matter With Kansas?* But what's the matter with Kansas is what's the matter with Connecticut and California and Washington state: The countryside is up in arms against the city over the issues of land use and property rights, and the city, in its high-minded high-handedness, must bear much of the blame for this.

The hated Ron Sims acknowledged as much after the Cedar County secessionists lost their case in the state supreme court. Sims said the movement succeeded in telling the county it needs to decentralize and be more sensitive to rural concerns. "It has been a message that has clearly been received by me," he said in 1998. Seven years on, Sims is still in place, and the country still comes to town, waving placards saying RON SIMS, KISS MY GRASS. One recent aggrieved protester asked a *Seattle Times* reporter, "Can I come take 65 percent of your condo?"

Late last November the Bush administration proposed to cut more than 80 percent of designated "critical habitat" for Pacific salmon and steelhead from southern California north to the Canadian border. Coming so soon after the election, the proposal looked like an extravagant thank-you note to the builders, loggers and landowners of the coastal heartland and a cheerful fuck-you to the effete city crowd of environmentalists and recreational users of the countryside. Grandly scorning best available science, it gave notice to America that this administration means to champion your right to do what you damn well please on your own damn land.

It is the duty of "civil governments" to "protect the rights of property, as well as those of life and liberty," Isham Harris, governor of Tennessee, told the state legislature in January 1861 as he severed Tennessee from the Union. The war between the states began as a quarrel over property rights. Be grateful for small mercies: In the present rancorous division of the U.S., at least property means property, not slaves.



"Yeah, but with me—up front—you know I'm a weasel."

DEBBIE GIBSON

(continued from page 134)

Dreams" and "Lost in Your Eyes." The music wasn't cool, but Gibson knows in her heart that she planted the seeds for the current crop of female pop-rockers.

"Britney, Jessica Simpson and all the rest will deny that they grew up on my music," Gibson says with a sly smile. "But I'm sorry. If you were living in the South when 'Shake Your Love' was a hit, you were singing it with a hairbrush in your pink bedroom."

There's no bitterness in her tone, probably because (a) Gibson is rich enough not to care, and (b) she actually has talent and always did. Gibson wrote, produced and sang her own songs even when all she had was a crappy Casio keyboard and a four-track tape machine in the family garage.

And then there's (c): Gibson's career continues to thrive. She has flourished as a stage actress for more than a decade, with lead roles on Broadway and London's West End and in traveling productions of *Les Misérables, Grease* and *Chicago*. Doing theater helped her connect with her sensuality. Take her role in *Gypsy*: "I've never felt more powerful than when I was standing in front of an audience with nothing but feathers covering my breasts."

The same sense of confidence is displayed in these pictures. "There's not a joke about myself I haven't heard," Gibson says. "I'm already anticipating people's reactions to seeing me here: 'Lost in Your Thighs,' 'Electric Boobs.' But I'm like, 'Okay, whatever, bring it on.'"

In many ways Gibson is a whole new woman these days. She sold the pop-star mansion and now lives on her own in Los Angeles—happy, optimistic and, as the song goes, wild and free. Still, she hasn't left New York behind entirely. "I'm not like other L.A. girls," she says. "I like guys who can bring out the rude, politically incorrect side of me. And I'm really comfortable in my own skin and really comfortable with my body. I haven't had so much as a Botox shot. I'm probably the only 34-year-old in L.A. who hasn't. Everything's natural."

Which is why she decided to show off here, even though it earned her a few raised eyebrows. "My dad doesn't even like that they have nude statues in the White House," she says. "But PLAYBOY is an icon. My guy friends want to know, 'Can you get me into the Mansion?'"

Gibson is more than happy to keep looking forward. "I recently had some old clothes shipped to me. When I saw the jackets with the padded shoulders I thought, I can't believe I was 19 years old and dressing like Joan Collins. I felt like begging the world to forgive me."

The way she looks now, we're the ones who should be begging.

WHERE & HOW TO BUY

Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 42, 45–48, 98–100, 120–125 and 166–167, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.

GAMES

Page 42: *Capcom*, capcom.com. *Eidos*, eidos.com. *Electronic Arts*, eagames.com. *Namco*, namco.com. *Sega*, sega.com. *Sony*, playstation.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 45–48: *BMW*, bmwusa.com. *Galco*, usgalco.com. *Luminox*, luminox.com. *o8o Studio*, o8o.com. *Pentax*, pentax.com. *PodSkinz*, macskinz.com. *Royal Mirage Dubai*, royalmiragedubai.com. *Wood Contour*, woodcontour.com.

SOUND + ART

Pages 98–100: *Arcam*, aslgroup.com. *AudioQuest, Avid, PS Audio, SolidSteel*, amusicdirect.com. *Meadowlark Audio*, meadowlarkaudio.com. *Rogue Audio*, rogueaudio.com.

SEX, DUDS AND ROCK AND ROLL

Pages 120–125: *A.B.S by Allen Schwartz*, absstyle.com. *Bailey*, baileyhats.com. *Buckler*, bucklerjeans.com. *Caffeine*, caffeineculture.com. *Champion 1919 Collection*, champion1919.com. *Chrome*, available at Lark in Chicago. *Chip & Pepper*, available at Bloomingdale's. *Columbia*, columbia.com. *Daang Goodman for Tripp NYC*, available at Trash and Vaudeville in NYC. *Diesel*, diesel.com. *Dragonfly Clothing Company*, dragonflyclothing.com. *Duckie Brown*, 212-675-8627. *Iceberg*, 310-274-0760. *Jean Paul Da'mage*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue. *Jean Paul Gaultier*, available at Chasalla in Chicago. *Jean Paul Gaultier Homme*, available at Jean Paul Gaultier in NYC. *John Richmond Denim*, available at Lounge in NYC. *Miskeen Originals*, miskeenoriginals.com. *New Era*, available at Lids stores nationwide. *Nike*, nike.com. *Paul Smith*, available at Paul Smith in NYC. *Trash and Vaudeville*, available at Trash and Vaudeville in NYC.

POTPOURRI

Pages 166–167: *Anson Mills*, ansonmills.com. *The Countryman Press*, countrymanpress.com. *John Allan's*, saks.com. *Orvis*, orvis.com. *Piece of Adventure*, pieceofadventure.com. *Playboy Store*, playboystore.com. *Technotunes*, technotunes.com. *Traveler Guitar*, travelerguitar.com. *W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery*, wrcase.com.

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THE ROCK

(continued from page 68)

conventions. Who got your vote in 2004?

THE ROCK: I voted for Bush, just as I did in 2000.

PLAYBOY: Why?

THE ROCK: I believe in working hard and taking care of your family, giving thanks to God, having fun. And in supporting your troops and the president in power. I believe in Bush's leadership. Had John Kerry won, he'd have gotten 110 percent of my support. But we have to be thankful every day and not forget our troops fighting for our freedom, guys who've agreed to pay the price if necessary.

PLAYBOY: Are you a Republican?

THE ROCK: I'm a fiscal conservative, but I'm very liberal on some issues—like you can be gay and you should be allowed to marry who you want to marry. Who are we to judge? The paramount issue, in my opinion, is the defense of this country. I also feel that under no circumstances should anybody who's an American speak against America. I am passionate about that.

PLAYBOY: Not long after you had your first child you put a traditional Samoan tattoo on your arm. Did fatherhood lead you to embrace your heritage?

THE ROCK: I'm sure it did. My daughter inspires me like nobody else I've encountered. I was always very proud of being half black and half Samoan, but only recently have I wanted to grasp the culture on my mom's and my dad's side. My grandfather had a body full of traditional tattoos. I wanted to tell the story of my life with them too.

PLAYBOY: Was this something you had planned for a long time?

THE ROCK: I'd always thought about it. In Polynesian culture tattooing is a big emotional and spiritual thing. This is not some anchor with my wife's name wrapped around it or a heart with a dagger through it. It's meaningful because you're telling your story. I have a Polynesian warrior's face that covers my heart. My life, struggles, loyalties and family are here. My daughter is here, my ancestors. God is here.

PLAYBOY: How long did it take?

THE ROCK: Sixty hours, three sessions. The first was maybe 18 hours. It's all done freehand. I sat with this guy who is an amazing artist. His name is Po'oino. He lives on the beach—no house.

PLAYBOY: Did he also do your grandfather's work?

THE ROCK: No, another Samoan tattoo artist did my grandfather's work in Samoa in the 1970s. My grandfather had it done with a bone, tap-tapping. That was very painful, and he almost died.

PLAYBOY: Why?

THE ROCK: Ink poisoning and the fact that the process typically takes about a week and my grandfather had to get it done in two days. He had to get back into the ring, so it was done around the clock. He ended up in the hospital.

PLAYBOY: What about you? Are you finished with tattooing yourself?

THE ROCK: Nah, I'm going to get my face done.

PLAYBOY: That will be a first for an action star. Do you fear you'll be compared to Mike Tyson?

THE ROCK: Here's what I really fear—getting that call from Ron Meyer at Universal, and he's screaming, "What are you doing? You've destroyed your career!" That's why I'll never do it.

"Who is she?!"

MUSIC

(continued from page 95)

was in college. We were in my dad's house. He was home at the time, and she and I were on a water bed. You hear stories about people climaxing quickly their first time, but for some reason I went for a long-ass time—20 minutes.

MARILYN MANSON I think I was 16. It's been so long I forget. It was on a baseball diamond at about 11 P.M. in Canton, Ohio. I'd gotten drunk on Jim Beam that I'd stolen from my grandmother and smuggled in my Kiss thermos. It lasted 35 seconds. It was just something I had to get out of the way.

SLASH I was 13, and she was 12. We did it at her and her mom's apartment. We were listening to *Houses of the Holy* by Led Zeppelin. The song that comes to mind is "Dancing Days." We were smoking a lot of pot and drinking Southern Comfort. We had to go to the laundry room to do it. Every time after that, her mom would take a Valium and we would do it on the couch in the living room. When I hear that record now, it reminds me of that. When you're that age, to really have sex is a big deal to everybody else. But to us it was just this thing we were into. After a while her mom got hip to it. As long as we kept the door closed it was okay.

G. LOVE We were listening to *High Tide and Green Grass* by the Rolling Stones. I was 15; she was 14. We would always go to her house after sports practice because she lived by the school. We were very much in love. We used to chill before her dad came home and listen to Janis Joplin, the Velvet Underground and the Cowboy Junkies. But that day it was the Stones. I still have the record, and of course today it sounds better than ever.

JACOBY SHADDIX, PAPA ROACH I was at a party, and this girl from school asked for a ride home. I was about to drop her off, and she goes, "I don't feel like going home. Can I come to your house?" My parents were asleep, and my room was 10 feet away from theirs. We were listening to *Pyromania* by Def Leppard. She goes, "I've had a crush on you for a year." I'm like, "Fucking cool." This chick wasn't a virgin. She jumped on me, and we started making out. Then we started fucking. We were going at it for a while, then she got off and sucked my dick. I was like, This can't be happening. This is the shit you see in porno movies. Then the door flew open, and my mom came in. I was sitting there with a raging hard-on. My mom was white as a ghost. She slammed the door, and I was tripping. I guess it's shocking to walk in and see your son getting a blow job. I was scared of the pussy for a good year after that.

JA RULE Anything with a smooth groove is good when it's time to get rowdy. My first time was horrible. My cousin and I had these two chicks who were sisters, and we took them into a stairwell in the projects. There wasn't enough space, and I couldn't get anything right. You have to be comfortable your first time.

GENE SIMMONS I had just turned 14. I had a newspaper route and had to pick up the weekly pay. It was a Friday night around Christmas, and it was freezing. This woman must have been in her early 20s and must have been drunk. She came to the door in a see-through nightie and started crying, "Oh, my husband. It's Christmas. Where is he?" I said, "Maybe I'll come back later." She goes, "No, come in." She sat me down, pulled my pants down and rode me. When it was all over, I was afraid to come back. I got the money and a nice tip. I suppose I gave her the tip.

TOMMY LEE I was 13 years old. It was the girl next door—my sister's best friend—and I got busted by my sister. My sister walked in and saw me fucking her on the floor of the garage, where I used to have this little drum room. She just freaked. And because it was her best friend, she told my parents. Fuck, it was all bad, dude. An all-bad first experience.

MACY GRAY I was 15 years old. My boyfriend and I went to the drive-in during the day and we were supposed to go right back to my house, but we left the movie early because my mom was timing us. We went to his aunt's house and did it in this tiny room on a little twin bed in the corner.

JONATHAN DAVIS, KORN I was 18. It was a fluke. I was hanging out with my friends, drinking and kicking back, and this girl took me home and fucked the shit out of me. I didn't want to say I was a virgin, so I just did it—and she loved it. I couldn't believe I was fucking, but I did a good job. It wasn't one of those things where you just put your dick in someone and come. I fucked for a long-ass time. It was awesome.

CONRAD KEELY, AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD I was listening to Sonic Youth's self-titled first album. My girlfriend and I had driven to Seattle to see a Nirvana show. Before the show she asked if I wanted to make out in the car. So then it happened, and as we were in the heat of it, Krist Novoselic knocked on the door and asked us for a light. He said, "This car smells like teen spirit!" And I told him, "That's not teen spirit—that's my jizz!" I didn't realize who he was until I saw him onstage. I still think that's probably the best Sonic Youth record to fuck to.

BRET MICHAELS I was almost 15, and my buddies and I had a plan. We decided separately to be with the same girl, but I was going to go first. We went on motorbikes, and we'd strapped a blanket down. I brought my Nazareth *Hair of the Dog,* and "Love Hurts" was playing. My buddies took off on their dirt bikes, and the girl and I were in the woods. I'd bought an unlubricated condom because I didn't know jack shit about condoms. I'd never put one on before, so it ripped. She was lying on the blanket and smoking, and she said, "Are you ready?" She didn't get a chance to put out her cigarette before I was done.

NELLY I was real young. The girl was 15, and I was 12. I lied to her and told her I was older. I was a little hot-ass. It was at my grandparents'. I don't remember it lasting too long.

SCOTT RUSSO, UNWRITTEN LAW I think I was 14. My friends and I used to hang out at this building site and smoke weed, drink our parents' liquor and talk about how none of us had had sex yet. Girls weren't on my radar—all I cared about was skateboarding—but then this girl invited me to her house when her parents were out. She pulled me up to her mom's room, and we started making out. I hadn't had a wet dream yet, and I hadn't started masturbating, so I had no idea what coming felt like. As soon as I put it in I thought, God, this is better than Disneyland—quickly followed by, Holy shit, I'm going to piss. It probably lasted a minute and a half. MTV was on, U2's "With or Without You" was playing, and I was terrified that I'd just pissed inside this girl.

WAYNE COYNE, THE FLAMING LIPS It was no big deal. I think I was 16. I had gotten a job working as a cook at Long John Silver's. This woman I knew from high school, who I ended up living with for four years, came by one summer night with a few of her friends. They were drunk, and it happened about five hours later at her house. Steely Dan was playing in the background, and I did the best I could.

CAM'RON I was 12. Me and my baby were at a friend's house cutting school, and we put on a porno and did it.

JOSH HOMME Well, I lost it, but then I found it behind the couch with that one sock that's always missing. I was supposed to go to youth group and didn't go. She was a girl I knew from school. I mean, I was 13—who else would she be? But it was way better than I expected. I've been addicted ever since.

DAVE NAVARRO I was 13. I arrived at her house around three P.M. By 3:04 I was on my way home. I felt like a king.

CARMEN ELECTRA I was 16. It was in Cincinnati in the backseat of a car. It wasn't glamorous. I don't remember it

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being so great. I actually felt really bad that I didn't wait longer.

XZIBIT I was 14 years old and in my dad's bedroom. I was living in his apartment. There was this girl, and she took it from me viciously. It was the roughest three minutes of my life. She never saw it coming.

CHESTER BENNINGTON, LINKIN PARK I don't remember losing my virginity. I think I was 15 and on ether.

DERYCK WHIBLEY, SUM 41 I was in eighth grade, and I wanted to be the first guy in my school to have sex. My girlfriend was a big slut. After a week of dating her, I boned her. We did it in my parents' house when my mom was away for two days. It was quick. I've definitely had better sex since then.

LEMMY KILMISTER, MOTORHEAD I was 15, but she was 18, I think. She was on vacation in the resort town where I lived. She removed her bra for me because I couldn't figure it out. It was 45 seconds of ecstasy. Later on we did it for almost two minutes, and by the time she went home we had it up to about 25 minutes. That bloody sand gets everywhere.

DANGER MOUSE Jodeci was playing, something from *Forever My Lady*. She was the neighborhood ho. We skipped school and I planned to seduce her, but I got scared and tried to talk her into leaving. She was like, "You're not getting out of this." The combination of being dominated by the girl while listening to men sing kind of fucked me up. I didn't have sex sober again for about eight years.

LARS FREDERIKSEN, RANCID I lost my virginity to my now friend's girlfriend. He was supposed to lose his virginity to her, but I got her first. I was in seventh grade. He was in sixth. We didn't know each other then. He and this girl used to hang out after school, smoke cigarettes, watch *Voltron* and make out. She called him and said, "Today is the day," but he was grounded. The next day his friends had to tell him that some guy named Lars slept with her.

LADY SAW I lost mine when I was 17 to a guy who was very attractive and much older. He was also married. He told me, "Married people make the best lovers." He was a god. His son and I could have been lovers, but I wasn't interested in the son. It was painful, but afterward I was hooked. We'd do it wherever and whenever. We couldn't keep our hands off each other. At night we would be on the beach doing crazy stuff. He taught me how to ride a guy. That's been my favorite position ever since.

SULLY ERNA, GODSMACK I don't think I had a song playing when I lost my virginity. I don't remember what the hell was going on. We were 12 and 13 years old, I think. Music's always been important, but at that moment it didn't matter. It was all about figuring out how to put that square block in the round hole.

FAT JOE I was 16 or 17. I used to work in a candy store in Harlem. The girl lived on the second floor of the building. I went up there with her. She was older than me, a woman, like 25, and she just started giving me head. How did I do? Well, I didn't have to do much. It was like *The Basketball Diaries,* when Leonardo DiCaprio gets high on dope. Woo! You never forget that first one. She's probably some real old lady now.

MF DOOM I was listening to Keith Sweat's "Make It Last Forever." Back then he was the king. If you wanted to get a female in the mood, Keith was making panties drop. Maybe I was subconsciously trying to make it last forever. Looking back I wish it had been something like John Coltrane's "My Favorite Things"—all instrumental, smooth with no vocals. Now that's some mack shit.

STEVE SMITH, DIRTY VEGAS It was with my friend's girl. To this day he still doesn't know. She was a little older than me, and I thought I was a rock god. I had Terence Trent D'Arby's "Sign Your Name" on.

VAN HUNT A girl had a crush on me, but I didn't like her. Her big brother said if I didn't go out with her he would kick my ass. I started dating her. I had never had sex before, and it seemed like an exciting thing to do, so one day after a party we had sex. I think the music was Michael Jackson's "Dangerous." After a couple of weeks of going out and trying to pretend that I liked her, I figured I owed myself a little loving. I had more fun masturbating.

MATT GOIAS, FANNYPACK The first time I did it was to a Jungle Brothers album, *Done by the Forces of Nature*. I think the song was "Belly Dancin' Dina." She was a big girl, and I definitely felt more comfortable doing it the first time with a big girl. As we used to say, "Practice for the pretty ones."

JEFF HANNEMAN, SLAYER I didn't have any hair on my balls. I hadn't even masturbated. I was with my friend's older sister. We were swimming at her grandmother's house, and she said, "You have to take your clothes off before we go in the house. That's Grandma's new rule." The next thing I knew she was going down on me. I was scared shitless, but we hung out all day and had sex. I was going, "This is amazing!" She was into Zeppelin and kept playing "Kashmir" over and over. I found out years later that she'd used me. She had a new boyfriend who bragged about how his ex-girlfriend gave good head. She had never given head before, so she was experimenting on me. I'm not complaining.

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SCREAMS (continued from page 84)

The stolen Scream was a $60 million painting everyone wanted back but no one wanted to pay for.

would become the most famous painting in the world.

Now *The Scream* was suddenly gone, and this 1994 theft also produced national embarrassment for Norway. Not only had the most famous and valuable painting by its most famous citizen been stolen, but it was taken on the morning of the first day of the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, a town about 80 miles north of Oslo.

Police suspected the theft was a publicity stunt by a radical antiabortion group that had threatened to disrupt the Olympic Games. The group immediately claimed responsibility and announced it would return the painting if a graphic antiabortion commercial was aired on national television. For the Norwegian authorities, it certainly appeared to be a political crime. Little did they know that the assault had actually been planned and perpetrated by two friends from the poor Oslo neighborhood of Tveita.

Enger, 26 at the time, had played professional soccer for the Norwegian club Valerenga, but his first love was theft. In 1988 he made his first major score, walking off with Munch's *Vampire* from the ill-fated Munch Museum. Enger was quickly caught and jailed, and the painting—also worth millions—was safely recovered.

A few years later, out of jail and back in Tveita, Enger hooked up with the teenage Ellingsen, a young man with spiky blond hair, a slight build and an almost cherubic face. "We were like brothers," Enger later told a reporter.

In those heady days of winter 1994, Enger and Ellingsen must have been jubilant. Their 50-second snatch was famous, on front pages and in leading newscasts around the world. They were the toast of the Norwegian underworld.

But the duo could not be accused of thinking ahead. They assumed that the deep pockets of the museum's insurance company would pay the ransom they demanded. But *The Scream,* they learned, was uninsured. And as Dick Ellis could have told them, the Norwegian government would never pay a ransom.

Ellingsen and Enger found themselves in possession of a $60 million painting everyone wanted back but no one wanted to pay for.

They desperately needed a plan B.

"How 'bout that bass, eh?"

CHARLEY HILL

Charley Hill is probably the politest man you'll ever meet. He asks if our interview can take place in London's Kew Gardens, a lush botanical paradise and former haunt of kings and queens of England. Once inside, he proceeds to guide a detailed tour, pointing out horticultural and architectural features and displaying an encyclopedic knowledge of the people and events that shaped the gardens. During a stop for a cup of tea and a slice of cake at Kew's cafe, he carefully thanks everyone—the attendant at the gate, the girl at the cash register, the busboy cleaning the tables outside.

This is not your typical cop. He looks and sounds like a university professor. He plays choral music in his car, a little silver Renault.

The son of a U.S. Air Force officer and an English mother, Hill was raised on both sides of the Atlantic. He attended George Washington University in Washington, D.C., where, he says, he was "bored out of my mind." So he volunteered for the Vietnam draft and in 1968 found himself in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, fighting deep in enemy territory. "I was the intellectual grunt of our platoon," he says.

After Vietnam, Hill returned to his studies, winning a Fulbright scholarship that took him to Trinity College in Dublin. From there he experimented for two years as a schoolteacher before deciding he wanted to be an Anglican priest. Using money from a Veterans Benefits Administration grant, Hill completed a bachelor of divinity at King's College London. By the time he earned his degree, he says,

the most valuable thing he had learned was that his strong faith had little to do with the Church. "So I joined the police," he says, and for the next 20 years he distinguished himself as a gifted, if maverick, detective. "I was not the Yard's idea of a good police administrator," he says. "I take that as a compliment."

In 1993 Hill was assigned as Scotland Yard's liaison to Europol, a European organization that tackles transborder crime. Stationed in the Hague, the Dutch capital, Hill commuted each week from his London home, catching a plane early on Monday mornings and flying back late on Fridays.

The Monday after *The Scream* was reported stolen, Hill got the call from London. Scotland Yard's Art and Antiques Squad had come into possession of a lead and wanted him to go undercover. Hill, who had spent much of his career in the Yard's Criminal Intelligence Unit infiltrating drug crews and organized crime gangs, was a natural choice. He had undercover skills and the intellectual pedigree. Now he was asked for a strategy.

"Give me a few minutes to think about it," Hill said to his contact before hanging up. He stared out his office window, gazing down at the canal below. A plan formed in his mind, and he called back immediately. "Here's what we'll do," he said. He would pretend to be a representative of the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, which was at the time spending tens of millions of dollars in a major acquisitions spree. The thieves would be told the museum had decided to pay to retrieve the painting for the sake of world art. Hill theorized that, with the Getty's money as bait, the crooks would lead him to the stolen picture.

Dick Ellis, the Yard's point man for the *Scream* investigation, liked the plan. Now all they needed was for the thieves to make their move—and for the Getty to play along.

Ellis flew to California and arranged a meeting with the Getty's head of security. To Ellis's delight, the museum gave the plan its wholehearted support. It created a special post for Charley Hill, who would adopt the identity of Chris Roberts, a roving ambassador for the Getty. To ensure the charade was convincing, the Getty made up business cards and letterhead stationery, created a telephone number that would always be answered by a secretary and even put Roberts on the payroll, backdating its computer records to give him seniority.

Ellis returned to London triumphant. The trap was set.

DEALING WITH THE DEVIL

Charley Hill is explaining why crooks steal "smudges," art-trade slang for paintings. "You have to understand," he says. "There's nothing glamorous about this. It's not like in the movies. There's no Mr. Big in a castle on a hill ordering the theft of great works of art so he can hang them in his private museum. That's just crap."

The true face of art theft, says Hill, is rather more mundane, practical and brutal. Most stolen paintings are minor works, valuable but not too well-known and easy to slip into the hands of the many dealers who bridge the world between the black market and the legitimate one.

Art is bought and sold in a free-market economy, and within it the black market in stolen art is unregulated, unpoliced and uninvestigated. Stolen paintings are recycled through auction houses or private trades, often ending up in the hands of innocent purchasers.

According to Julian Radcliffe, chairman of the Art Loss Register, it takes seven to eight years on average for a painting to resurface from the black market. Forty percent of the 160,000 stolen items in the ALR's database are paintings, he adds.

Hill has scored a number of high-profile recoveries in the past decade, including that of *Rest on the Flight to Egypt,* a masterpiece by Titian, considered the greatest painter of the Venetian Renaissance school. The painting was stolen in 1995, and Hill recovered it in 2002. He adds that one option for art thieves is to use paintings as collateral to fund other illicit deals.

"What you quickly learn in this game," says Hill, "is that no crook steals art exclusively." Art theft is usually part of a lively portfolio of criminal activities, including burglaries, petty theft, drug deals and even bank robberies.

On the trail of a stolen painting, you must enter this world, and once there a deal with the devil is normally required. It is a deal that places most art recoveries on a fine ethical line.

In 2003 the Tate paid $6.7 million to secure the return of two J.M.W. Turners, stolen in 1994 and valued at $46 million. The money was paid to a middleman who brokered the deal between the crooks and the museum. Hill had similarly arranged for a $139,000 finder's fee to be paid to the middleman who engineered the return of the Titian.

The art world doesn't consider these deals to be ransoms, as they usually involve people steps removed from the thieves themselves. Still, it is dangerous territory. "Given the choice between never seeing these pictures again and getting them back, most people would prefer to get them back. If someone helps in getting them back, that person should get what is proportionately a small sum of money compared to what the art is really worth," says Hill.

These negotiations usually require time and patience, two qualities Ellingsen and Enger were not familiar with. They demanded outright ransom. In

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order to get *The Scream* back, police decided they would have to allow the crooks to get uncomfortably close to a huge sum of money.

PLAN B: OLSEN AND ULVING

With the hottest painting in the world on their hands and an ever decreasing number of options for getting rid of it, Ellingsen and Enger turned to an acquaintance in Norway's criminal underworld. Jan Olsen, who had completed an 11-year jail sentence for arson a few years earlier, was recruited to act as a go-between in negotiations for the painting's return. Olsen's major qualification for this role was his claim that he could get direct access to the chairman of the National Gallery. Olsen's tactic was to approach the gallery and tell the chairman that unless someone paid up, *The Scream* would be returned in pieces.

Olsen's inside track was a circuitous one. By chance, he'd been sporadically buying pictures from an art dealer and auctioneer named Einar-Tore Ulving. Over the course of their business relationship the two men had had several conversations, and during one exchange Olsen learned that Ulving's wife's cousin was the National Gallery's chairman.

Ulving remembers Olsen's first approach shortly after *The Scream* was stolen: "He called and said he wanted to meet me. He seemed very uncomfortable talking on the telephone. We met outside a hotel, and he told me he could get *The Scream* back and asked if I could arrange a meeting using my family connections." A meeting between the crook and the chairman was duly arranged.

Olsen was told that if things were to progress, he must provide absolute proof that he could deliver *The Scream*. "Read *Dagbladet* on Tuesday," Olsen told Ulving. "You'll get your proof."

Sure enough, the Tuesday cover story of this Norwegian daily newspaper featured a nearly full-page picture of a fragment of *The Scream*'s broken frame, discovered near a bus stop in the small town of Nittedal, about 10 miles northeast of Oslo. The piece of frame had been found following an "anonymous" tip to the paper. "That was good proof," says Ulving.

THE STING

On May 5, 1994 Charley Hill (as Chris Roberts) spoke with Ulving. It had been decided that the Roberts character should be based in Brussels to further muddy any possible connection between him and the London police. Hill flew to Brussels that morning to make the call. He told Ulving he would be in Oslo that evening and staying at the Plaza Hotel. Could a meeting be arranged between him and Olsen?

A little before 10 P.M. Hill walked into the lobby of the Plaza. Sporting a jaunty bow tie and looking every inch the art scholar, he strode up to the reception desk and loudly announced his name. Ulving and Olsen approached the man from the Getty.

Olsen made an immediate impression on Hill. Although in his 40s, he was clearly in superb shape, a good-looking, confident man who while in prison had become an expert kickboxer. Next to him stood Ulving the art dealer, shorter and balding, nervously smoking Marlboro Lights.

After some quick introductions, Ulving made his excuses and tried to leave. "I thought I was there just to introduce Olsen to this man Roberts," he says. He was rudely disabused of the notion. Olsen told him, "No, no, you're not leaving here. My English is not good. I need you to translate." Thus beginning what he described as a "long, long two days," Ulving reluctantly checked into the Plaza.

Hill went to his suite on the 27th floor to freshen up. Three floors below, an advance team, including a British undercover officer called Sid Walker (not his real name; his identity is still secret), had established a surveillance operation to monitor the sting along with Norwegian police.

That evening Hill, Olsen and Ulving sat in the lounge of the Plaza and began their negotiations for the return of *The Scream*. Olsen said the robbers wanted 3.15 million Norwegian kroner (about $472,000) to return the painting, a price Hill agreed to. Given the lateness of the hour, the men called it a night and arranged to meet again at breakfast.

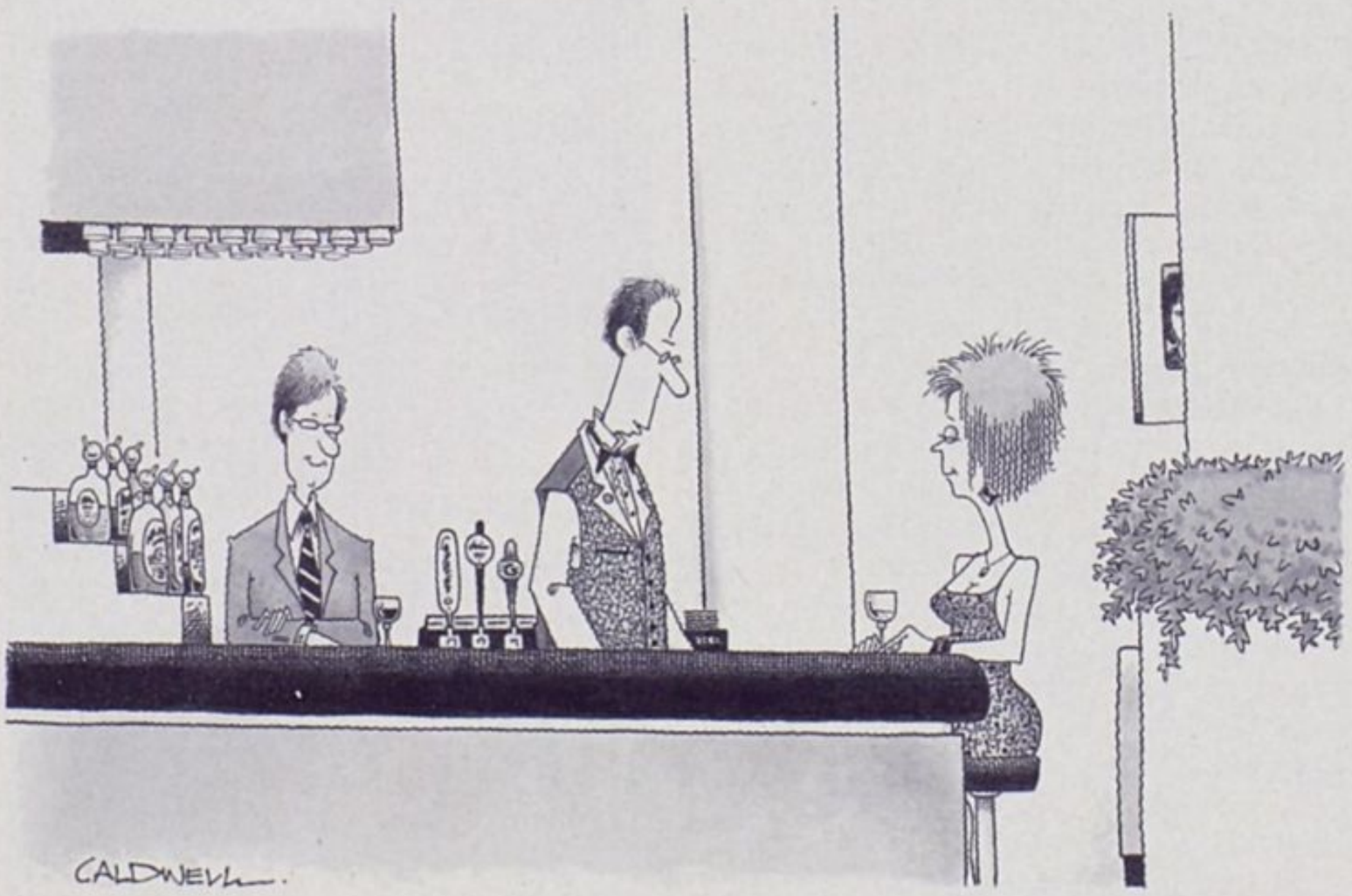
At eight A.M. Hill and Ulving were taking the elevator down to breakfast when, Hill says, he began to get a bad feeling. When the elevator doors opened, he was confronted with a sight that filled him with horror.

"What was absolutely, staggeringly unbelievable was that the Scandinavian police were having their annual drug conference that weekend in the hotel," says Ellis. "Neither the Norwegian police nor the bad guys had thought to check the hotel out before our team turned up." Added to the mix of hundreds of cops were dozens of plainclothes Norwegian officers who had been drafted to monitor the sting operation. "It was a disaster," says Ellis.

Hill, Olsen and Ulving reconvened that afternoon in the Plaza's reception area, but this time Hill was accompanied by Sid Walker, whom he introduced as a guard for the money. While Ulving stayed in the lobby, Hill and Walker took Olsen upstairs to Walker's room, where Walker produced a sports bag filled with nearly half a million dollars in what police call flash money.

Police have an awkward relationship with flash money, says Ellis: "You need it because once you have flashed the bad guys the sight of a suitcase full of cash, they tend to go for it. Trouble is, you have to make sure you get it back." Hill and Walker were nervous about the sheer volume of cash now inches from the face of Olsen, a violent career criminal. Being that close to half a million dollars seemed to calm Olsen, though, who had become increasingly agitated by the police presence in the hotel. He left the two undercover policemen, saying he had a "short but important meeting" to attend, and returned an hour later having apparently received the authorization to proceed.

Because of the police conference at the Plaza, nobody argued with the suggestion



"The gentleman at the end of the bar would like to buy you as many drinks as it might take."

that they move to the quieter Grand Hotel a few blocks away. While they switched hotels, Olsen ordered Ulving to drive him to the underground parking lot of an apartment building. Once they were inside, a man appeared from the shadows equipped with what looked to Ulving like some sort of metal detector. Olsen and the man spoke briefly, and then the car was swept for bugs and tracking devices. Satisfied the car was not under electronic surveillance, the men drove to a quiet side road near the city center, where Olsen ordered Ulving to stop the car and turn off the engine and lights.

They sat in the dark in Ulving's black Mercedes 300TE wagon for several minutes. Then a rear passenger door opened and a man slid onto the backseat. He was dressed in all black, with a cap pulled down over his forehead and a scarf pulled up over his nose and mouth. He positioned himself directly behind Ulving, preventing the driver from observing him. For the next 12 hours the man Ulving knew only as Mr. X would be his constant shadow, sent by the crooks to supervise the handover of the money and the painting.

"I had a very bad feeling. I was very unhappy," says Ulving of Mr. X's entrance. The hulking, silent man scared him.

Hill was in his room when the phone rang. He glanced at the clock; it was 11:30 P.M. Ulving was in reception. The deal was on. Hill went down to meet the three men. Sitting in the back of the Mercedes, he told them bluntly, "I am not going for a midnight walk in the woods with you."

"Then the painting will be destroyed," said Mr. X. "It's now or never."

It was Ulving who solved the impasse. "Look, why don't I go with Mr. X to see the painting, and Olsen can stay here with you and the money?" Everyone agreed, but as Hill got out of the car, Mr. X said, "If anyone follows us, my people will find out immediately, and the painting will be destroyed." He closed the door and turned to Ulving.

"Drive."

Ulving did as he was told. "We started to drive going out of Oslo," he says, "turning left, right, left, right, going straight ahead and through some tunnels until we ended up in Etterstad, in east Oslo. Mr. X told me to stop. He got out and walked about 50 yards to a phone box where, I assume, he made a call. He came back a few minutes later and told me to drive south on the E18 highway and not use my cell phone. He said someone would call and give me instructions. Then he walked off."

•

The E18 led straight to Ulving's home in the picturesque town of Tønsberg, 30 miles south of Oslo. An hour later there had still been no call, so Ulving decided to go home. It was two A.M. on Saturday, two days since he'd last seen his wife and children. Ulving pulled up in front of his house and went inside. As he opened the door to his house, his home phone began to ring. A man's voice told him to get back in his car and drive to a diner called By the Way, just outside Tønsberg.

Spooked at the realization that his house was being watched, Ulving did as he was told and five minutes later pulled into the diner's deserted parking lot. Five minutes after that he was still there, sitting alone in the dark. "Suddenly Mr. X appeared from behind the building, and he was holding something wrapped in a blue sheet," he says. "He put it in the trunk of my car and then told me to drive home. At that point I refused."

It was one thing to be at the beck and call of Mr. X (whom Hill describes as a psychopath). But Ulving says he drew the line at letting the man into his home, where his wife and two daughters were sleeping. "My brain was racing," Ulving says. "There was no way I wanted this man in the same place as my family." A solution suggested itself. Ulving owned a summer residence a few minutes farther up the road in the old fishing village of Åsgårdstrand, which by coincidence also happened to be where Munch had a summerhouse and studio in a converted fisherman's cottage. Ulving knew the Åsgårdstrand house would be closed up for the winter and deserted.

It was freezing inside the summerhouse. The wrapped painting was placed on the dining room table. Ulving gingerly unwrapped the package.

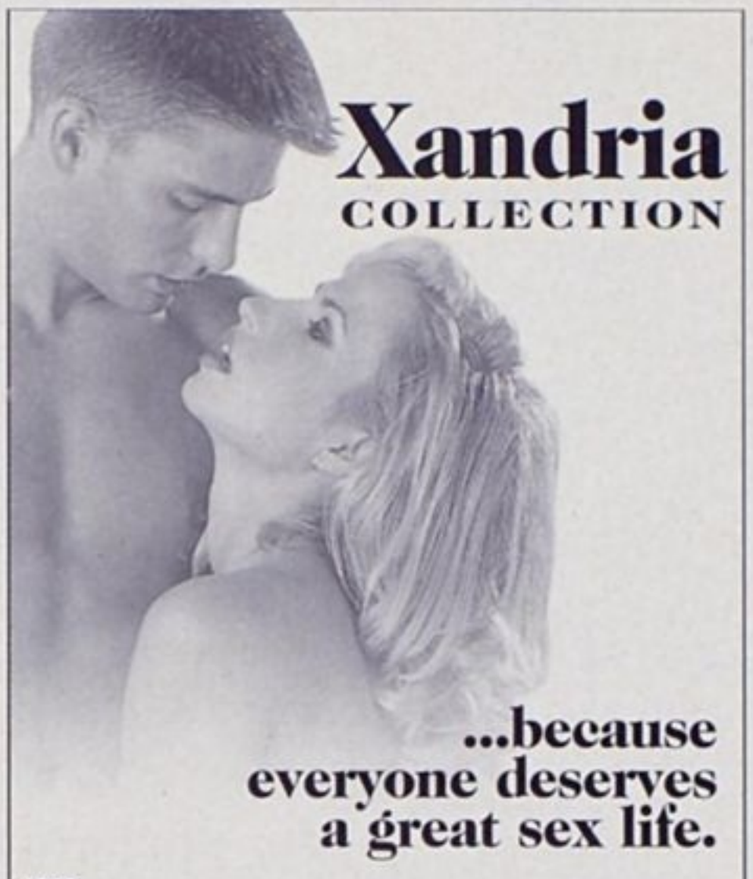
He says it felt as though the air were vibrating around him. "When you are that close to genius, you can feel it coming out at you from inside the paint," he says. He rewrapped the painting and took it to the basement through a small hatch in the kitchen floor.

Mr. X ordered Ulving into the front room. It was now three A.M. For the next two hours they sat in cold, dark silence, the anonymous thug brooding silently, hunched inside his coat, facing the door. Ulving, exhausted but unable to sleep, was chain-smoking, reasonably concerned for his life. No one in all of Norway knew where he was at that moment.

An hour or so later, sick of waiting in the cold, dark cottage, Ulving hatched a plan to lure Mr. X out of the house. He promised the criminal the chance to drive his Mercedes 500SL, a tiny two-seat convertible that was not only expensive but rarely seen in Scandinavia. So the art dealer and his hulking bodyguard drove back to Ulving's family home, swapped cars and then spent a few hours killing time, driving the back roads between Tønsberg and the small town of Drammen, waiting for dawn to break and Ulving's cell phone to ring.

MAY 7, 1994: "I'VE GOT IT!"

For the first time since he'd gotten to Oslo, Charley Hill was enjoying him-



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self. He was sitting in the backseat of a rental car watching his partner, Walker, put on a show for Olsen. Walker was giving the crook a master class in antisurveillance driving. "Olsen was obviously impressed," says Hill. "He had no idea the man in the driver's seat was the most accomplished professional undercover officer in the London Metropolitan Police." Dick Ellis says of Walker, "He was just amazing."

The three men were on their way to Drammen, about 20 minutes southwest of Oslo, their destination a diner near a tollbooth where they had been told the exchange could take place. As they arrived Hill noticed a brand-new Mercedes 500SL parked outside.

Inside the diner at a table with his minder sat Ulving, looking miserable. Walker volunteered to get everyone coffee, and when he returned Ulving was confirming that, yes, he had seen the painting. So the robbers had seen the money, Ulving the intermediary had seen the painting, and now here they all were, sitting somewhere in the middle of nowhere without a plan. Nobody seemed to know what to do next. A tour bus began to unload its passengers, and the cafe started to fill up.

Walker suggested a solution: He would take Olsen and Mr. X back to the hotel, where the money was stashed, while Hill and Ulving went back to Åsgårdstrand for the painting. As Oslo was closer, it seemed to give the crooks the advantage of getting to the money at least half an hour before Hill and Ulving could get to the painting. It was agreed that Hill would call the hotel as soon as he had seen the painting, and the money would then be handed over by his partner, Walker.

Hill and Ulving set out for the summer cottage in Ulving's Mercedes 500SL. Hill says the journey took years off his life: "Not only was Ulving a terrible driver, but he was also groggy from exhaustion and lack of sleep and kept weaving all over the road. I was sure we were going to end up in a ditch or under the wheels of a truck." Eventually the pair arrived at Ulving's house and went inside. Ulving went to the kitchen and opened the hatch to the basement.

Hill never lost his sense of caution, even with the mild-mannered Ulving. "I'm not going down there," Hill said. Ulving shrugged and disappeared into the darkness, emerging a second or so later holding the wrapped painting. Hill took it from him and walked to the dining room table. He carefully laid it down and pulled back the edges of the sheet.

"Shit."

Hill found himself looking at a rather plain piece of board covered with a few scribbles and smears of paint. We've been had, he thought, before realizing he was looking at the back of the picture, which bears the remains of Munch's first, failed attempt to capture *The Scream*. Hill turned the painting over, and there in front of him at last was the famous howling figure. "The thing about a masterpiece is that it tells you it is a masterpiece," he says. "You can look at a thousand paintings, but when you look at something like *The Scream—boom!*—it comes straight out at you." The painting also bears telltale wax splatters caused by Munch blowing out a candle too close to it. The distinctive splatters are like a fingerprint Hill had memorized. "You can't blow a candle out twice the same way," says Hill. The wax marks he saw were the indisputable proof he needed.

•

"Oh fucking hell, what have I done?"

The painting was too big to fit through the door of Ulving's compact sports car. The two men opened the roof, and Hill managed to squeeze the painting behind the seats. Hill jiggled it and was able to push it down another inch or two—enough to close the roof. Hill then realized that, as he'd wrestled with the painting, he had accidentally pushed one of the Mercedes's headrests so far into the back of the picture that a small but noticeable lump had appeared in the screaming figure's shoulder.

"Oh shit."

He looked over at Ulving, who seemed not to have noticed. With his secret intact, the top secured and a slightly dented Norwegian masterpiece pressing into the back of his head, Hill let Ulving drive him to the nearby Åsgårdstrand Hotel. After renting a room Hill took the painting in through a rear fire escape and barricaded himself inside Room 525, pushing all the furniture against the door.

It was 10:30 A.M. Pouring himself a generous whiskey from the minibar, Hill picked up the phone and dialed.

"I've got it," he told the voice on the other end.

•

Back in Oslo, the Norwegian police surveillance operation had descended into fiasco. The team managed to miss Walker, Olsen and Mr. X walking in through the front of the hotel and going up to Walker's room. And Walker didn't know that the two-man police team that was supposed to be in the room next to his had wandered off to get breakfast,

"Face it, Al. It's time to lose the pony."

taking the bag containing the $472,000 ransom with them.

Walker sat in the room with the two crooks, unaware that he was totally alone and without backup. As the minutes ticked away, Olsen and Mr. X got more and more anxious. The tension in the room was rising to an uncomfortable pitch when the door suddenly swung open. Standing in the doorway were the two Norwegian policemen, in full uniform, holding Big Macs, cups of coffee and the bag of cash.

They had walked into the wrong room.

•

NOT A SCRATCH, began the story in *Dagbladet* heralding the safe return of *The Scream* on May 7, 1994. "They must have ironed the bump out," says Hill, "or not noticed."

Over the next few days Ellingsen, Enger, Olsen and Mr. X—revealed to be an old criminal accomplice of Enger's named Bjørn Grytdal—were rounded up and charged. Enger, it seemed, couldn't resist telling the world about his role. He was arrested after placing a notice about the birth of his son in a local newspaper, announcing that his son had arrived in this world "*met et skrik!*"—"with a scream."

The four conspirators were convicted, but the court decided that because Hill and Walker had entered the country using false passports, they had been there illegally; therefore their entire operation had been unlawful. Convictions against three of the four men were overturned on appeal. Only Enger's conviction of receiving stolen property stuck.

THE TEFLON KID

Norway has changed in many ways since the 1994 heist; separated by a decade, the two crimes provide a picture of just how much. Ten years ago, stealing *The Scream* was an almost civilized affair: Two unarmed young men used a ladder to pull off an almost comical robbery in the still hours of early morning. In 2004 thugs with guns barged into a museum in broad daylight, threatening staff and visitors in a highly calculated and professionally executed raid.

Lulled by a liberal, open and—thanks in part to oil—affluent standard of life, Norway has been slow to react to the rapidly changing face of modern crime. Only 4.5 million people live in this land about the size of Montana, and they enjoy a lifestyle most Americans would envy. The average family income is about 60 percent greater than that of American families, and health and education are heavily subsidized. The UN Human Development Index rates Norway the world's most livable country year after year. Despite this affluence, though, crime rates have risen across the board in Norway, with violent crime increasing nearly 15 percent in the past eight years.

Yet there are few jails in this most liberal of countries, and the courts are loath to impose heavy prison sentences. Prisoners are often not remanded to holding cells before trial, and even when convicted they can spend months in the community waiting for jail space to open. Once inside, prisoners are released on leave after they serve a third of their sentence.

The system appears to be incapable of dealing with the highly mobile, professional criminal gangs that now operate across the open borders of Scandinavia and the rest of Europe. These criminals sans *frontières* slip through the porous borders with impunity, carrying out raids in one country and escaping to another.

In the past 10 years a highly violent hard core of professional armed robbers has evolved within Scandinavia. Not so much a gang as an informal network, this eclectic group includes Norwegians, Swedes, Albanians, Finns, Bulgarians, Pakistanis, Iranians—along with bikers and even neo-Nazis. Racial, cultural and spiritual differences are put aside when it comes to their work. They are real-life reservoir dogs, specializing in armed bank robberies planned and conducted with military precision. Among their number, according to Norwegian police, was the cherubic blond bandit William Ellingsen.

After walking away from his *Scream* charges Ellingsen entered this world. His crimes began to escalate. In 1998 he was implicated in a $170,000 bank robbery. He escaped to Costa Rica but was captured and deported to Norway, where he somehow managed to escape conviction. In September 2001 he was part of a team that pulled off what the Norwegian daily newspaper *Verdens Gang* called "the impossible."

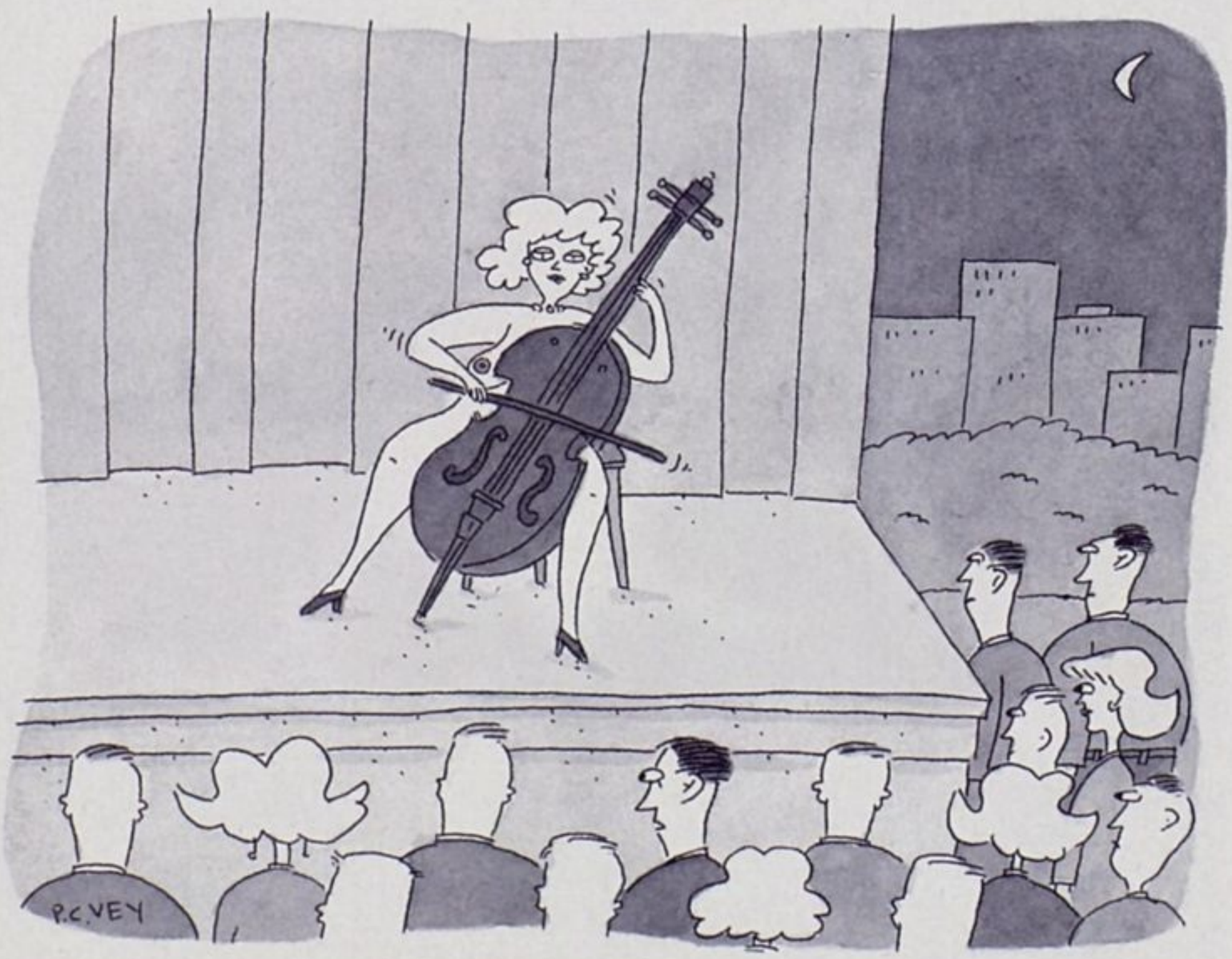
Ellingsen and his crew drilled their way through the concrete floor of a bank and dropped into the safe-deposit vault, where they opened and emptied more than 500 boxes, getting away with millions in cash, jewelry and other valuables. Ellingsen was caught and charged, but as usual the police couldn't make the case stick.

He was the Scandinavian Teflon Kid, good-looking, intelligent and daring. But on February 6, 2004, his luck ran out.

That night a number of underworld enforcers and debt collectors—the Norwegians call them torpedoes—held a party in the posh Gabels Gate area of Oslo. The gathering was well attended by members of the city's criminal fraternity, including Ellingsen. When a fight broke out between a bouncer and two torpedoes, Ellingsen tried to intervene. One of the men responded by pulling a pistol and opening fire. Ellingsen was hit and killed.

He was buried on February 13 to the sound of "Amazing Grace" and Metallica's "Nothing Else Matters." Three hundred mourners attended his funeral, among them the crème de la crème of Norway's criminal elite.

On that cold Oslo day it was doubtful that those at the funeral were conscious of the poignancy of the date on which they were burying their friend and comrade. Exactly 10 years and one day earlier, at the age of 18, Ellingsen had first burst onto the criminal scene when he made off with the second most famous painting in the world.



"Her first love was the accordion."

EPILOGUE: AUGUST 2004

Of the four men involved in the 1994 heist only Pål Enger and Bjørn Grytdal (Mr. X) were still in circulation when the August 2004 robbery took place. Ellingsen was dead, as was Jan Olsen, who had died the previous year as a result of intravenous heroin use.

Enger, who'd become something of a celebrity criminal over the previous decade, engineering little stunts to keep his name and photo in the newspapers, became uncharacteristically media shy in the aftermath of the Munch Museum raid. "Weapons are not my style," he said in a terse interview following the heist. "I have always used the methods of a gentleman." After being pulled in for questioning by Oslo police, the normally ebullient Enger disappeared. His cell phone is now dead, and at the time of this writing he had not been seen for several weeks.

For Charley Hill, *The Scream* has stirred both memories and curiosity. Hill, an analyst of the Norwegian criminal landscape, believes that the solution to last year's robbery may lie in the past. And in a surprising twist, he says, there may be connections to the fallen Ellingsen.

Two months after Ellingsen's death, the most violent robbery in Norwegian history was carried out in the west coast town of Stavanger. On April 5, 10 armed robbers raided Nokas, a hub for Norwegian banks. The robbers first drove a truck into the parking garage entrance of the local police station and set it on fire. As police ran from the building, the robbers hurled tear-gas canisters, creating a blinding fog. Mobile patrols responding to the alarms were sprayed with gunfire by the robbers, who were armed with automatic weapons. It was, by all accounts, like a scene from the movie *Heat*.

The gang then attacked the bank, smashing its way into the counting room with sledgehammers. In 30 minutes the crooks managed to haul away $8.5 million, keeping the police at bay with bursts of suppressing fire. During this firefight, which occurred around 8:30 A.M., a police commander was killed.

The level of violence and the murder of the policeman caused outrage in Norway. The authorities responded by declaring war on the criminal fraternity they suspected of being behind the raid: Ellingsen's former comrades. Soon many of those who had attended Ellingsen's funeral were either behind bars or the subjects of intensive police searches, their names appearing on wanted lists around Scandinavia. They included one of Ellingsen's pallbearers, who police believed was the mastermind behind the Stavanger robbery.

(concluded on page 161)

PLAYMATE NEWS

THE X-TREME TEAM: HOLLYWOOD IS CALLING

Getting physical has never been an issue for members of the Playboy X-Treme Team. Led by captain Danelle Folta (above, far left), the team is in its seventh year, has competed in more than 70 events and has more than 25 Playmates on its roster. What makes the girls so adept at everything from rock climbing to snowboarding to kayaking? "At training camp we put them through hell," Danelle says. "We take away outside influences and make them rely on one another to get through it." The hard work has paid off in more than just first-place trophies. As previously reported here, a movie about the team's triumph in 2002's Fiji Eco-Challenge is in the works. (Cameron Diaz will star as Danelle.) There are also plans for a reality show chronicling the search for a new teammate. Contestants will endure mental and physical challenges, including an X-Treme makeover. "We're a unique group," Danelle says. "Being on the team is about physical strength and being positive." In the end, Hef picks the winner, natch.

15 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Deborah Driggs became Miss March 1990 to earn money for acting classes, but she had no idea that one of her classmates would be her future husband: gymnast and 1984 Olympic gold medalist Mitch Gaylord. Though she wrote on her Data Sheet that her biggest fear was "being stuck in an elevator with another actor," Gaylord wasn't just another actor. "We didn't speak the entire first year," she says, "but at the end, the teacher paired us for a kissing scene." One way they keep their relationship thriving: Last year Deb co-wrote *Hot Pink: The Girls' Guide to Primping, Passion and Pubic Fashion,* about everything from pubic-hair grooming to bedroom behavior. Go to hotpinkbook.com.

CENTERFOLD STYLE FILE

Everywhere the Playmates go, photographers fall over one another to take their pictures. From left: Cara Zavaleta on the streets of Manhattan during her Playmate press junket; Victoria Silvstedt at an afterparty in Los Angeles; Nikki Ziering hosting a private party at Mansion nightclub in South Beach; Anna Nicole Smith backstage at the American Music Awards; and Shauna Sand at L.A.'s Spider Club for a Buffalo Jeans sponsor party.

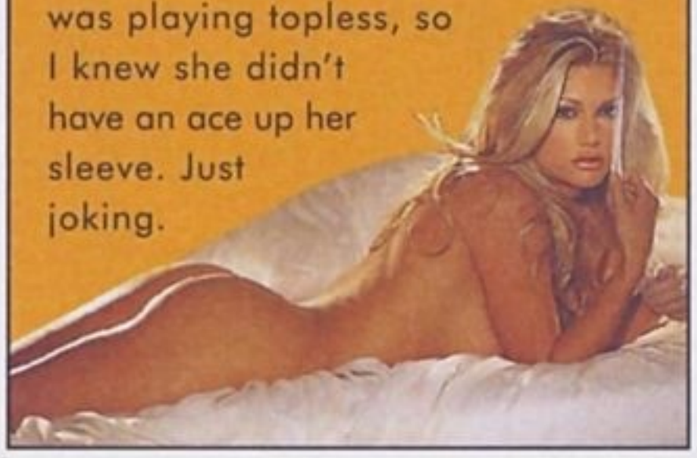
HOT SHOT

LUCI VICTORIA

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Willie Garson

My favorite Centerfold is Playmate of the Year 2001 and Miss April 2000 **Brande Roderick.** She's incredibly nice and stunningly gorgeous, of course, but she's also an amazing poker player. I played with her in the World Poker Tour Celebrity Invitational. Luckily she was playing topless, so I knew she didn't have an ace up her sleeve. Just joking.



POP QUESTIONS: MISS APRIL 2004 KRISTA KELLY

Q: Are you a big sports fan?
A: I was a tomboy in high school. I played basketball and volleyball, but now I prefer watching to playing. I love to watch hockey, but of course I never had the opportunity to participate—the guys wouldn't let me. I think they were afraid I would beat them.
Q: What would your former classmates say about your being in PLAYBOY?
A: I don't know what the girls would say. I think the guys would be shocked to see me now because I was never of interest to them. I got teased a lot because I looked like a boy. They never flirted with me. I never got valentines. I haven't seen many of the guys, but I'd like to stick my tongue out at them.

Q: Do you remember the first time you read PLAYBOY?
A: One of my ex-boyfriends used to read it. It always drove me crazy. One time I found the magazine in the bathroom, and I was so jealous that I hid it under the sink so he wouldn't see it. That was the first time I ever really saw one.
Q: Do you like being tall?
A: When I was younger I had a major complex about my height. Now I love being tall, and I love wearing heels. Sometimes, though, it's just a pain in the ass to find pants that are long enough.

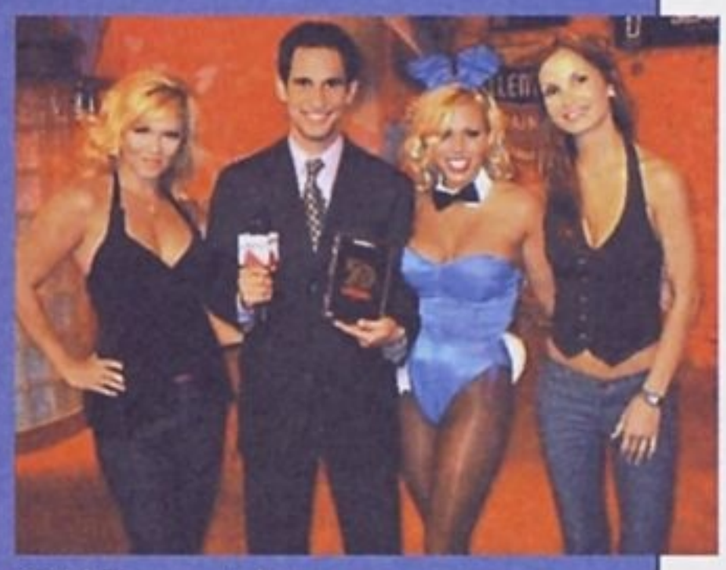
FOURSOME, ANYONE?

For golfers with superior taste, nothing beats the Playboy Golf Scramble, which combines the country's best courses with the world's most beautiful Centerfolds. The 2004 semifinals were held at the Palms Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. A glimpse of the action, from left: Pilar Lastra; the day's hostesses; Deanna Brooks interviewing players.

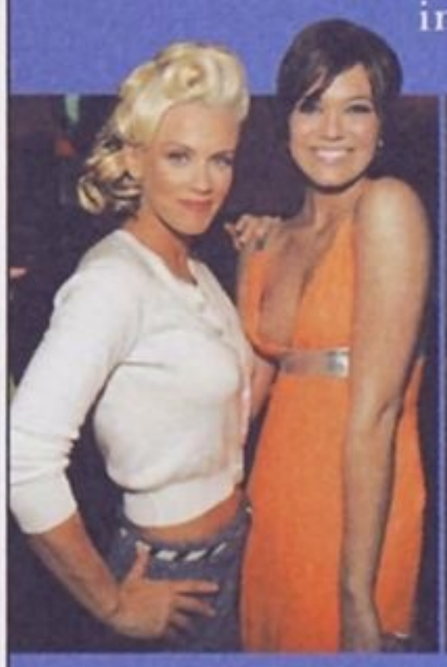
PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Nicole Wood, Stephanie Heinrich and **Alicia Rickter** (below) popped up on ESPN2's morning chat show *Cold Pizza* to celebrate the release of the *50 Years of Playmates* DVD collection....Another Playmate has gone daytime. Following in the footsteps of *General Hospital* star **Kelly Monaco, Daphnee Duplaix Samuel** has joined the cast of the soap opera *Passions,* playing Valerie Davis. "She's an executive assistant who winds up with more than stock options on her mind when she meets her new boss," reports NBC's website....Spotted the night of the American Music Awards: **Jenny McCarthy** bonding with Mandy Moore, and **Pam Anderson** hanging with Gwen Stefani (below). In other Pam news, according to *Daily Variety* she's set to star in a sitcom about a woman who's trying to stop falling for the wrong men. Fox has committed to six episodes....Still haven't gotten enough servings of the *American Pie* flicks? *American Pie 4: Band Camp,* featuring **Jennifer Walcott** and **Angela Little,** will soon be out on video.

LEROY NEIMAN



Cold Pizza gets hot.



Is there an all-girl band in the works?

cyber club

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at cyber.playboy.com.

SCREAMS

(continued from page 158)

As police continued to turn up the heat on Ellingsen's former associates, rumors began to circulate in Oslo that another big score was imminent—one that would have significant symbolic value.

It is hard to deny that the theft of *The Scream* and *Madonna* perfectly fit the bill, says Hill. "Don't make the mistake of trying to rationalize a crime like this," he explains, "because both the 1994 and 2004 thefts were carried out by irrational people who see the world very differently from you and me. These people are short-term thinkers and planners. They live for the now, and they tend not to live very long."

Hill continues, "Crimes like this make sense to them because they feel they are showing the world what they are capable of. These are trophy crimes. They have nothing to do with money—they can make much, much more from drugs, prostitution or armed robbery. No, this is their telling the world, 'We can do what we like when we like, take what we like and fuck you.' For those involved in the Stavanger robbery, it would have made perfect sense to order this theft. The crooks would have seen it as a good way to get the police chasing after something else and a good way of telling the world they are still capable of pulling any job they want."

Sources close to the Norwegian police inquiry have admitted that one of the leading theories of the 2004 Munch theft is that it had been perpetrated to draw police and media attention away from Stavanger. Several newspapers and a Norwegian television station have run stories quoting anonymous sources confirming that the Stavanger crew ordered the robbery. The Norwegian television station TV2 reported that the robbers were paid about $30,000 to commit the crime.

In late December Norwegian police arrested an unnamed 37-year-old man and confirmed that they have identified two other suspects. The paintings remain missing. Iver Stensrud, head of the organized crime unit of the Oslo police department, said, "We don't know where they are, whether they are still in Norway or whether they have gone abroad." The Norwegian daily *Verdens Gang*, claiming to have information from criminal sources, reported that both *The Scream* and *Madonna* are still in Norway but that both works sustained damage during the robbery. *Madonna* was thought to be significantly damaged, while *The Scream* was described as "diminished."

Francis Lundh contributed additional reporting from Norway.

VANITY VINYL

(continued from page 118)

called *Little Joe Sure Can Sing!* A few years after *My Cousin Vinny*, he returned to the studio for this novelty, which includes a gangsta rap in which Pesci discusses whacking squealers and sodomy with a crack pipe.

FOUR UNINSPIRING RECORDINGS INSPIRED BY A HIGHER POWER

TAMMY FAYE BAKKER, *Building on the Rock* (1975). This is one of several albums on which Bakker plays Susie Moppet, a pigtailed pig girl who explains in a shrill falsetto how smiling protects you from sin, which probably isn't true.

LOUIS FARRAKHAN, "Let Us Unite" (1984). In the 1950s the leader of the Nation of Islam was a calypso recording artist known as the Charmer. Smooth.

DAVID KORESH, *Voice of Fire* (1994). Muddled guitar rock. According to Koresh's bass player, "it's very difficult being in a band with God's messenger."

ANTON LAVEY, *Satan Takes a Holiday* (1995). The elevator music in hell.

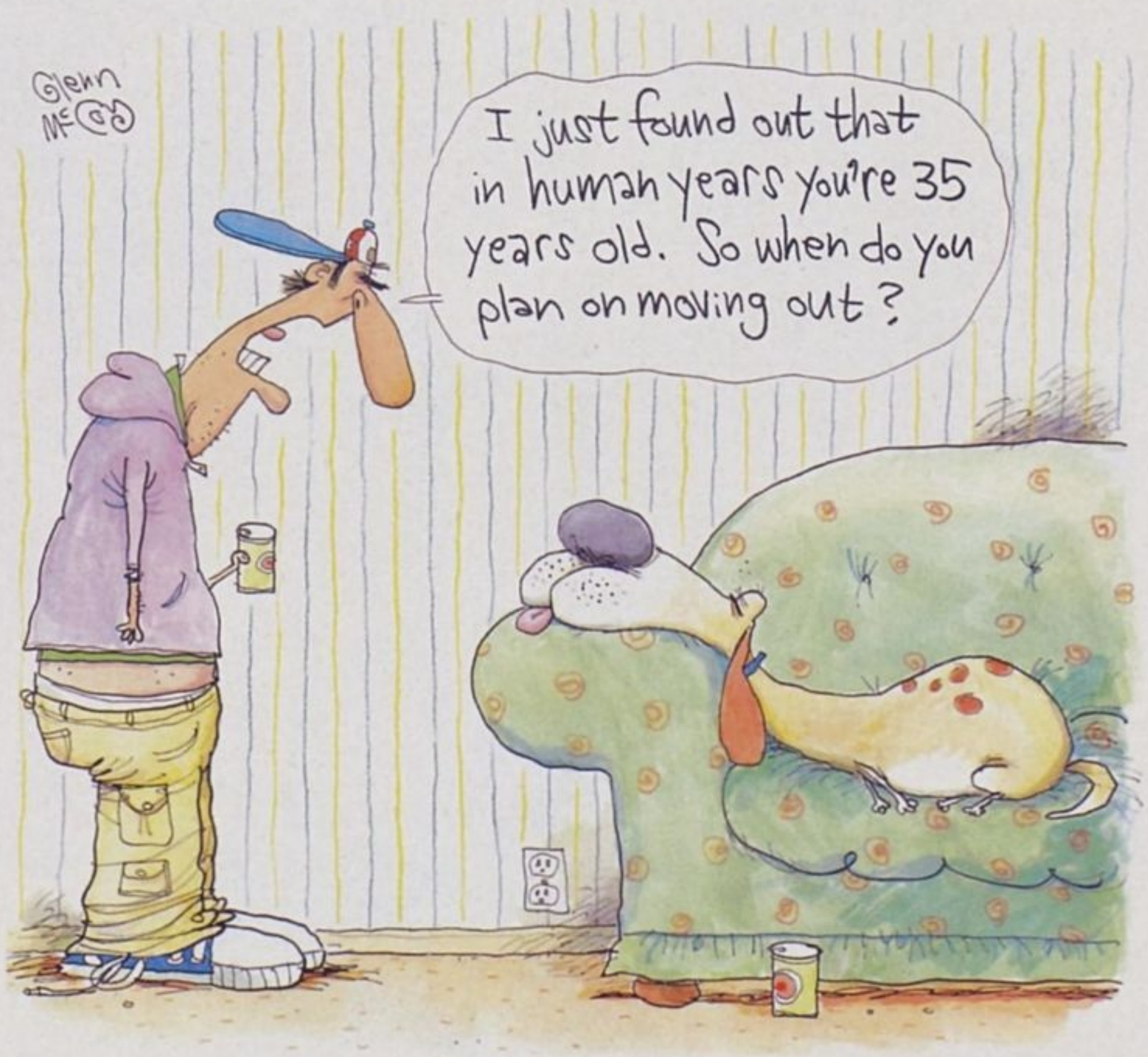
THREE BEST CELEBRITY ALBUMS OF ALL TIME

ROBERT MITCHUM, *Calypso—Is Like So...* (1957). Apparently the tough-guy actor hung tight with calypso musicians while filming a movie in Trinidad and returned to Hollywood ready to bring the West Indian vibe to the masses. Many ridicule this album, but it's one of the most entertaining calypso records of its day. Songs such as "Mama Look a Boo Boo" are a gas.

SHEL SILVERSTEIN, *Freakin' at the Freakers Ball* (1972). Famous for his kids' books and his work in PLAYBOY, Silverstein was also a fine songwriter ("A Boy Named Sue"). The title track invokes a utopia in which all the freaky people get off together: "White ones, black ones, yellow and red ones, necrophiliacs lookin' for dead ones.... Plaster casters castin' their plasters, masturbators baitin' their masters.... Freakin' at the freakers ball, y'all." It's one of the most beautiful sentiments ever expressed in song.

DIVINE, *My First Album* (1982). In America the hefty drag queen is best known for his work in such John Waters classics as *Hairspray*. But for a time in the 1980s Divine was one of the biggest names in dance music in Mexico and Europe. The driving "Native Love," the swelling "Shoot Your Shot" and the ridiculous "Jungle Jezebel" feature hypnotizing beats and bitchy, tough lyrics such as "You wimp, you wimp, hey who you calling a blimp?/I ain't your Aunt Jemima, and honey, you ain't my pimp!"

For more celebrity music, including audio clips, visit playboy.com/magazine.



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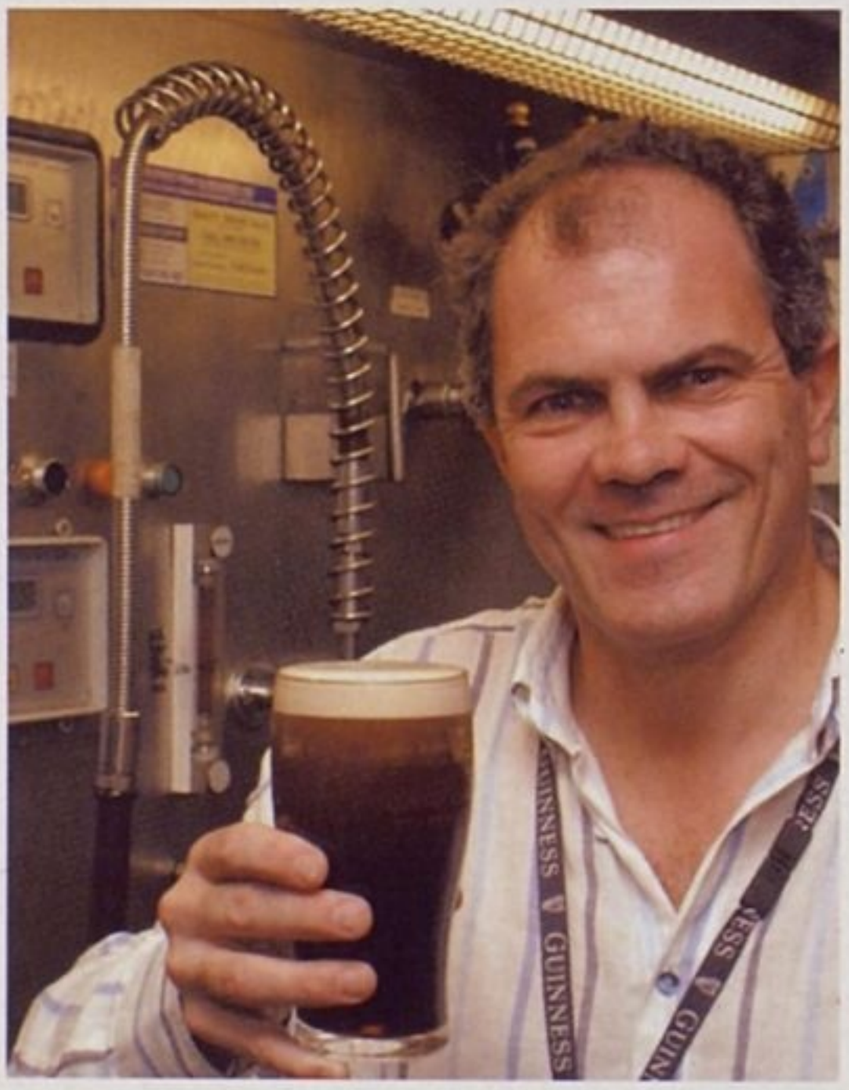
Playboy On The Scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN



Head Master

The toast of Ireland, Fergal Murray is one stout fellow

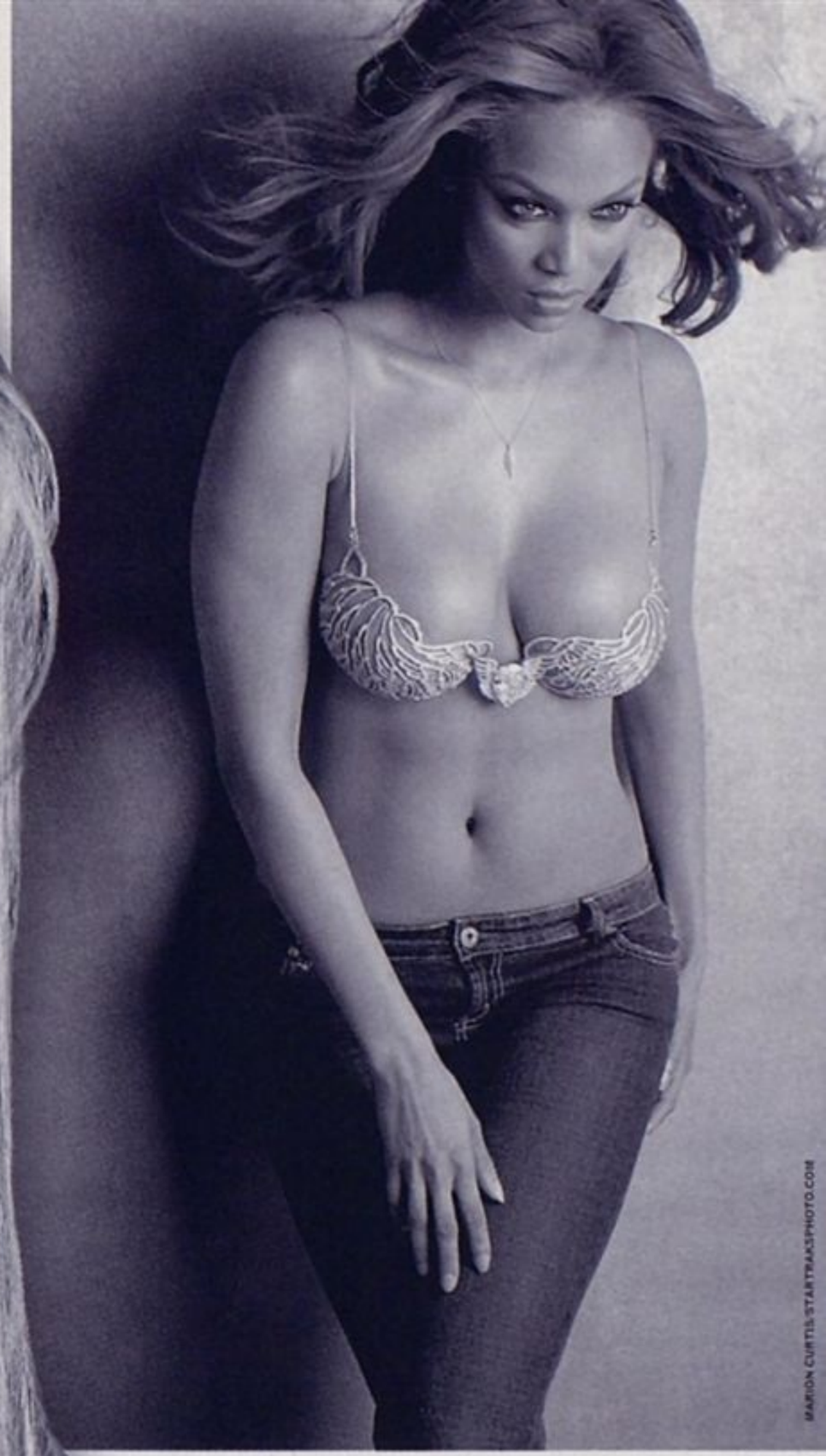
"How many pints of Guinness have I had in my life?" Fergal Murray asks as he loafs in an armchair at Gravity Bar, a stylish watering hole that looks out over the city of Dublin. "Well, one a day for 25 years is about 10,000. Figure you have to double that. Then probably double it again." There's a pause as he takes in the view. "About 50,000, I'd say." For the past 10 years Murray has served as brewmaster at Guinness's historic St. James's Gate facility in Dublin, where every drop of the stout drunk in America is made. By some accounts the 42-year-old is the most important man in Ireland. His job is to make sure every pint of Guinness you drink tastes as it did 249 years ago, when the company was founded. Suffice it to say that he makes friends quickly at the pub. "Grown men have cried when they've met me," he says. Though the affable brewer seems to take it all in stride, he's quite particular about the way his stout should be served. The seven rules for pouring a Guinness: (1) Use a clean, dry pint glass. (2) Pour at a 45-degree angle with the tap nozzle half an inch from the glass. (3) Stop pouring when the pint is three fourths full. (4) Let it settle for 119.5 seconds, give or take a few tenths. (5) Top off slowly to get a rounded head. (6) Drink. (7) Repeat as necessary. *—David Critchell*

Grapevine

Extra! Extra! Reid All About It

TARA REID upstaged everyone, including Paris Hilton, at P. Diddy's birthday party in NYC. She told the *New York Post*, "I'm known as this retard. I want to grow up. I don't want to be the drunk girl. I'm not crazy anymore." Tara, we like you just the way you are.

BRIAN PRAHL/SPLASH NEWS



MARION CURTIS/STARTRAKSPHOTO.COM

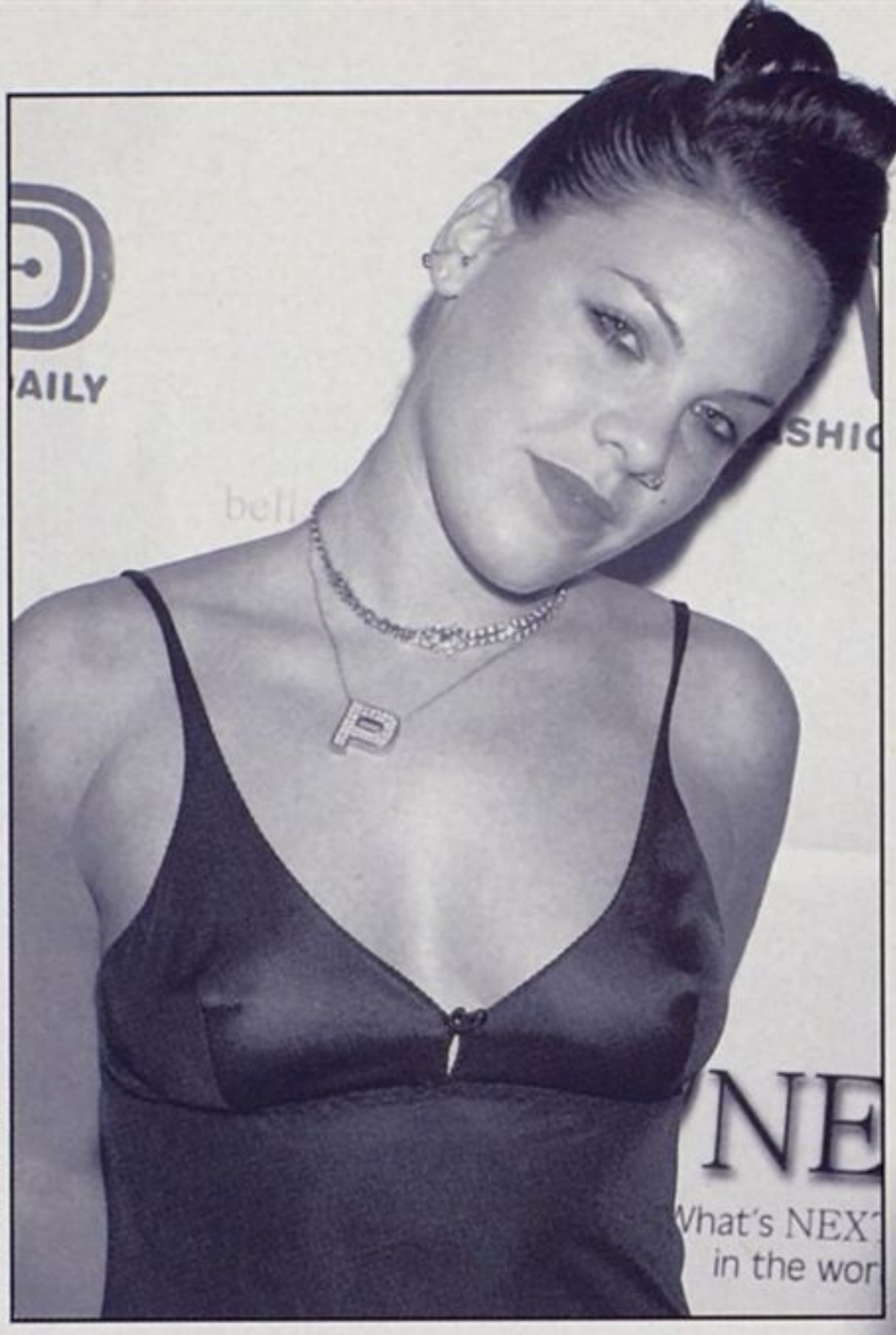
Banks for the Mammaries

The least favorite feature of Victoria's Secret model TYRA BANKS? Her fingers. "An ex-boyfriend called them Freddy Krueger fingers," she once said. Sounds like a picky fellow.

RONALD ASADORIAN/SPLASH NEWS

Slip Sliding Away

Perhaps you recognize model ANGELA LINDVALL from her various Prada, Gucci and Tommy Hilfiger ads. Or from her multipage spreads in *Elle* and *W*. Or maybe you've never heard of her. That's okay. We admit we hadn't either. But from now on, we're hijacking our girlfriend's *Vogue*.



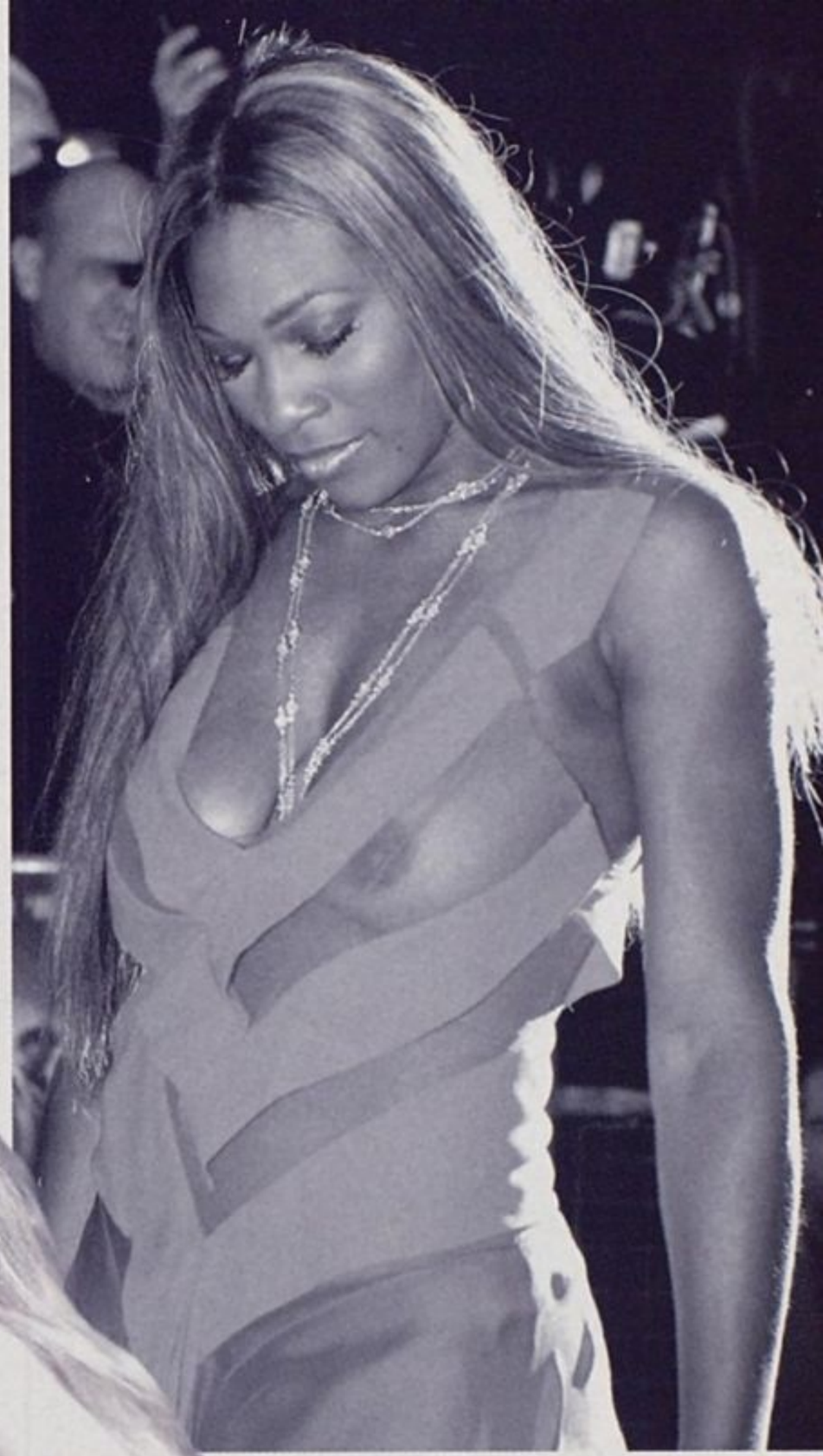
JEFFREY MAYER/WIREIMAGE.COM

Kink Pink

It's not easy being green, but it looks like fun to be PINK, here posing for *Fashion Wire Daily*. But where's her little dog, Fucker?

Nothing But Net

On and off the tennis court, SERENA WILLIAMS has become a fashion icon. She even has her own clothing line, Aneres (get it?). At the London premiere of *After the Sunset,* the champ caused quite a racket.



GETTY IMAGES

KORPA/ABACA

Cruz Flash

Penélope Cruz's equally hot sister, MÓNICA, is the face of L'Oréal in Spain. Tell us quickly—are there any more at home like you?

STEVE FONYO

Shall We Dirty Dance?

ALYSSA SVED has toured the globe in ballet and hip-hop productions and appeared on the TV show *North Shore*. We're thinking horizontal mambo.

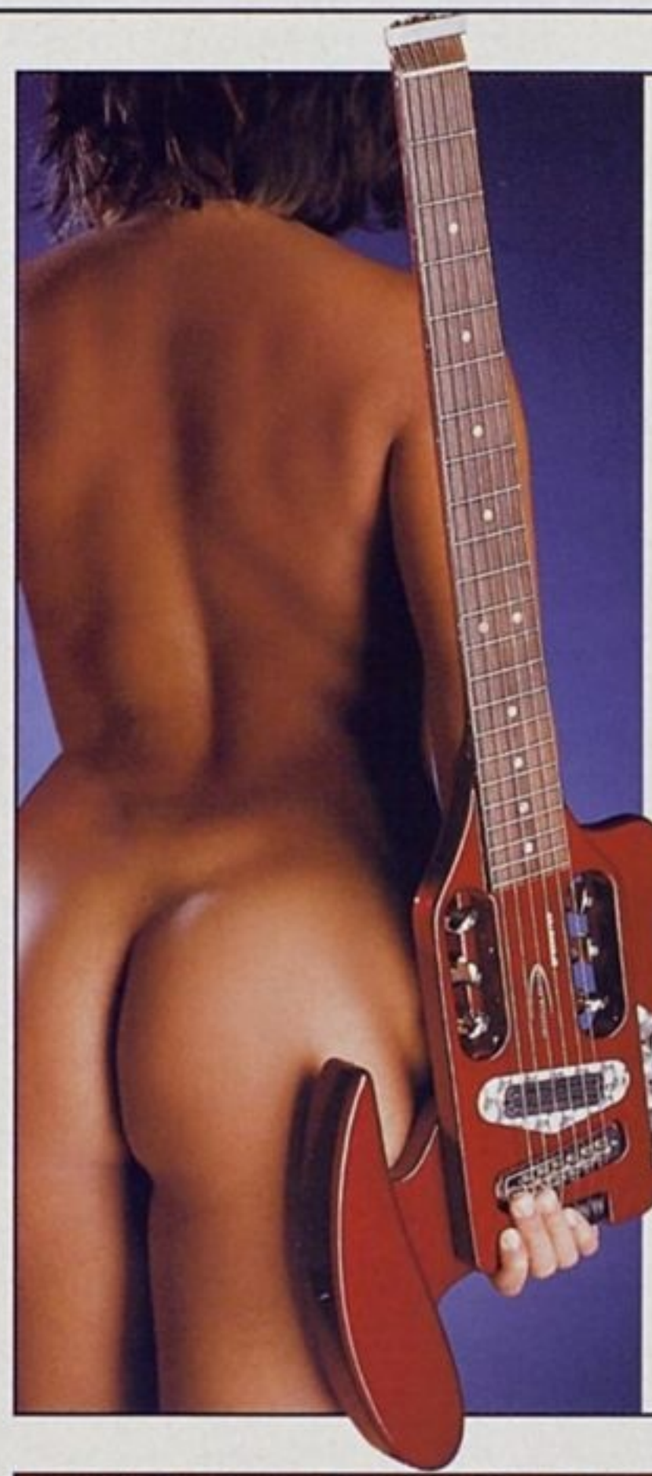
Potpourri

THEY RUB YOU THE RIGHT WAY

The secret to John Allan's success? He takes high-end grooming goos like those found in salons where the perms are expensive and the techno is deafening, then sells them in old-style men's clubs, where a guy can sip whiskey while he gets his hair cut. Can't make it to one of his two New York City clubs? Get the home treatment. From left, available at saks.com: face wash ($17), eye cream ($30), Ocean shampoo ($15), pomade ($19), Gelle X hair gel ($14), X-Bar soap ($11), Mint conditioner ($17) and lip balm ($7).

A LITTLE SOMETHING ON THE SIDE

The tastiest thing on this plate isn't the grilled peppers with rosemary and garlic. It's the polenta we're serving with it, courtesy of Anson Mills. This organic heirloom polenta is ground from *spin rosso della Valsugana*, a red-and-gold corn. It was all the rage in Italy in the 16th century, when polenta was invented, but it's now hard to find. If you've ever eaten polenta in a four-star joint (Thomas Keller's Per Se, *per esempio*), you've tasted the heavenly stuff. Four 12-ounce bags go for $20. Get info at ansonmills.com.



BIG SOUND, SMALL PACKAGE

Whether he's tracking down a lost love or trying to get the band back together, every man at some point needs to take the show on the road. When the highway comes knocking on your door, no other ax packs away quite like a Traveler guitar ($500, travelerguitar.com). An intelligent reverse-string design puts the tuning pegs inside the guitar's body, making the whole package remarkably compact (the upper-arm support shown here on the Speedster model is removable). The Escape model even has an onboard headphone amp so you can rock out in the back of the van without disturbing anyone. It also comes in an "acoustic" version, which, against all common sense, requires an amp to be heard.

THE EVEN SHARPER INSTINCT

Owning a pocketknife is a rite of passage. First you get your Swiss Army blade, which you use to impress your friends at show-and-tell. Then, after the stitches are taken out, you graduate to the gentleman's knife, which you use to impress the ladies. Now, because nothing says "I'm the sensitive type" like a blade-and-bullet combo, W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery has joined the firearm company Ruger to produce Ruger-branded pocketknives. Pictured: the three-and-five-eighths-inch Medium Stockman ($93), with three blades, and the four-inch Mid-Folding Hunter ($130), with one blade. The slicers are made of hand-forged surgical steel, with Brazilian cattle-bone handles. Info at wrcase.com.

ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK

MP3 players are fantastic, but at the end of the day they're one more gadget in your pocket. Reduce your overall pantsload with the Technotunes MP3 watch ($200, technotunes.com). With 256 megabytes of storage, it'll get you about four hours of music, a match for most flash players. Load it up via USB, plug in some headphones and you're perpetually ready to rock. We salute you.

GOLF SHOTS

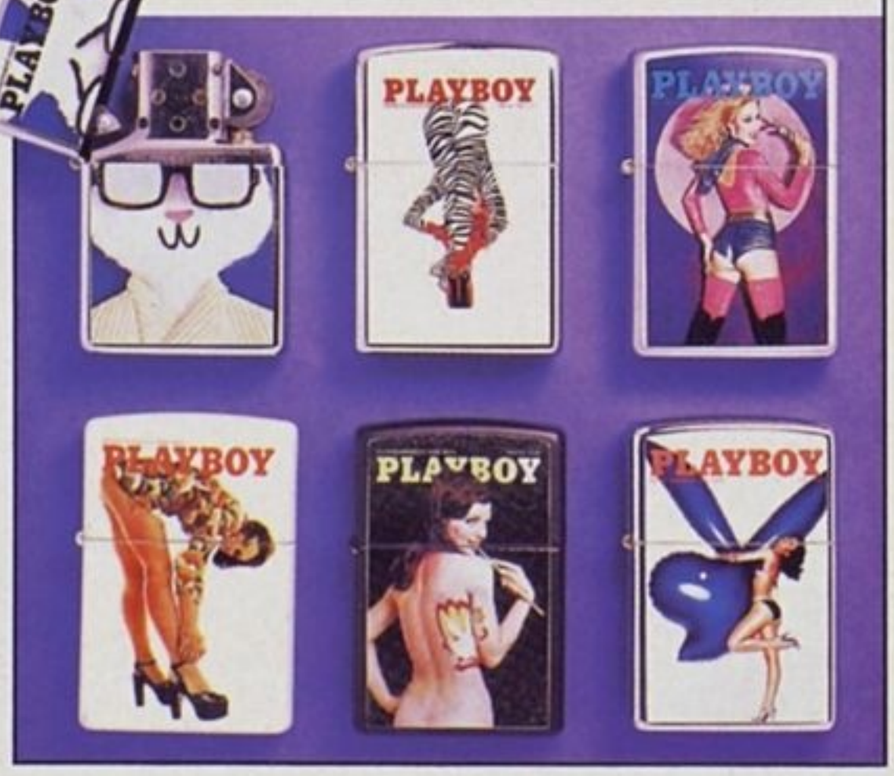
Who wants to wait until the 19th hole for a whiskey when you've just shanked the drive on the fourth? To take the edge off crises such as gabby partners, four-putts and a tab of the brown acid, Orvis offers the golfer's flask ($39, orvis.com)—a four-ounce stainless steel sanity saver that tucks into a classy brown leather pouch and holds markers, tees, a pitch repairer, a pencil and a scorecard. There's nothing like a dram of malt to steady the hands—and to keep you from wrapping that expensive driver around an oak tree.

WET DREAMS

With 3 million lakes, 3,000 rivers and plenty of seacoast, Alaska is a fisherman's paradise. If you can't make the trip, here's the next best thing: Troy Letherman and Tony Weaver's *Top Water* ($50, the Countryman Press), an informative guide full of amazing photos. Each of Alaska's top 10 game fish has a chapter devoted to it, with details about the species's range, history and biology and, most important, which tackle and flies will get that baby landed.

FIRING SQUAD

Next time she needs a flame, light up her life with the planet's two most dependable sources of heat: Zippo and PLAYBOY. Each of these special-edition lighters ($35, playboystore.com) features a different classic cover from the 1960s, 1970s or 1980s. Just take our advice and don't let yours out of your sight. We've found these have an uncanny ability to sprout legs and walk away.



100,000-MILE-HIGH CLUB

Everyone has baggage, but not everyone's has been to space. These limited-edition totes from Piece of Adventure ($95 to $195, pieceofadventure.com) are made from parachutes used on space missions. Choosing one means picking both a style (laptop, messenger or shoulder) and a moment in astro history (the 2004 International Space Station or the 1990 Russian *Soyuz* Mir mission). Each bag includes plenty of pockets and padding to keep your laptop or gadgets snug. The way we see it, if what they're made of was tough enough to carry a spaceship, it's tough enough to tote your earthbound burden.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 147.

Next Month

BATH TIME WITH THE WWE'S CHRISTY HEMME.

FICTION BY T.C. BOYLE.

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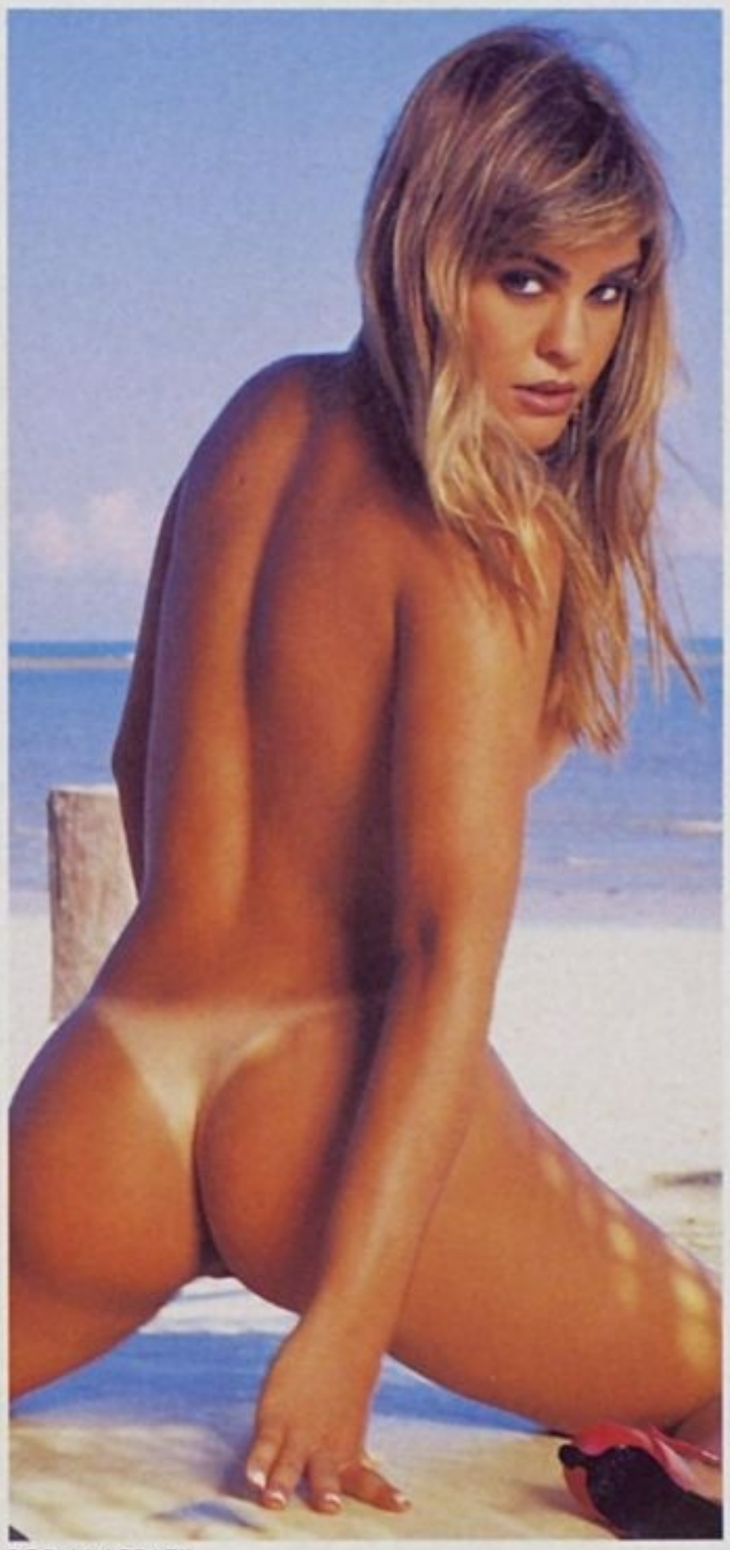

BORN IN BRAZIL.

CHRISTY HEMME—YOU'VE SEEN THE WORLD WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT SUPERSTAR AS A *MAN SHOW* JUGGY DANCER, A MUSCLE-AND-FITNESS MODEL AND THE WINNER OF SPIKE TV'S *RAW* DIVA CONTEST. BUT YOU'VE NEVER SEEN HER LIKE THIS. AN EXCLUSIVE ALL-NUDE PICTORIAL.

THE LAST DAYS OF UDAY HUSSEIN—IN HIS 39 YEARS, SADDAM'S OLDEST SON LIVED A LIFE OF PRIVILEGE AND WEALTH. HE WAS A SADIST AND A WOMANIZER, AS MOST OF THE WORLD LEARNED. HE ALSO RAN A NATIONAL NEWSPAPER, THE MOST POPULAR TV NETWORK IN THE NATION AND OTHER BUSINESSES—WHILE HE SIPHONED OFF MILLIONS FOR HIS OUTLAW EMPIRE. IT TURNS OUT THAT UDAY, WHO HAD BEEN PASSED OVER BY HIS POWERFUL FATHER, ALSO HAD A HIDDEN AGENDA. WITH STARTLING EXCLUSIVE REPORTING FROM INSIDE UDAY'S CAMP, THIS IS A STORY THAT WILL REWRITE IRAQ'S HISTORY. BY **PETER ARNETT**

GIRLFRIEND GONE WILD—JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE WITH A WOMAN WHO THINKS PORN IS DISGUSTING DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN'T LIVE OUT YOUR SEX FANTASIES. SOMETIMES ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK. OUR INTREPID REPORTER COAXES HIS GIRLFRIEND INTO THE SEXUAL UNKNOWN, INCLUDING A HOMEMADE SEX TAPE. BY **COREY LEVITAN**

LESLIE MOONVES—THE CHAIRMAN OF CBS IS ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST PROMINENT AND CREATIVE BROADCASTERS. TUNE IN FOR PREVIOUSLY UNEXPLORED DISCUSSIONS OF CBS'S BIG TURNAROUND, HOW MANY *CSI* SPIN-OFFS HE'S WILLING TO AIR, HIS BEING CALLED TOO CONSERVATIVE AND HOW DAVID LETTERMAN'S NEW BABY HELPED BOOST RATINGS. *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW* BY **DAVID SHEFF**

ARE YOU A FOOL?—FORGET PRANKING THE GUY IN THE NEXT CUBE AND TAKE OUR QUIZ. DID YOU ACCIDENTALLY SEND A PORNOGRAPHIC E-MAIL TO YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW? WHAT IF YOU FOUND A RANDOM BOTTLE OF PILLS ON THE GROUND? HOW WOULD YOU REACT? DEPENDING ON YOUR ANSWERS, MR. T MAY OR MAY NOT PITY YOU.

MENA SUVARI—FROM HER ROLE IN *AMERICAN PIE* TO HER SEXY TURN AS KEVIN SPACEY'S LUST OBJECT IN *AMERICAN BEAUTY,* THE ALL-AMERICAN GIRL HAS HAD AN ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER—AND SHE'S ONLY 26. *20Q* BY **STEPHEN REBELLO**

PLUS: FICTION BY **T.C. BOYLE,** THE BEST IN NEW SUITS, THE PERFECT POKER NIGHT, BRAZILIAN BEAUTIES FLAUNT THEIR BIKINI WAXES, BABE OF THE MONTH **CAMILLE ANDERSON** AND MISS APRIL, **COURTNEY RACHEL CULKIN.**

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